# IMPORTANT SPEECHES OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BEING A COLLECTION OF MOST SIGNIFICANT SPEECHES DELIVERED BY JAWAHARLAL NEHRU FROM 1922 TO 1945

EDITED BY
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Jawaharlal in western dress speaking to the people of the West in London



**All India States People's Conference at Ludhiana.** A characteristic study of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru while he was delivering his speech on the occasion of the States People's Conference. Dated : 17—2—39.

"We worked for the dawn, but the long night has continued, and it may continue .... how long I do not know. Many of us now in the vanguard of the nation's fight may not live to see the dawn. But the dawn will come. Meanwhile, the torch has got to be kept burning to light the path. And I want to know how many brave arms are there amongst you to take this torch from my falling hand. Be worthy of the charge."

*Jawaharlal Nehru*

"It seems to me," says the Chinese philosopher, "that Gandhi is the female spirit, while Nehru is the male spirit guiding India in her struggle for independence." The female principle, he says, is complemented and activated by the male principle. Gandhi is a mystic and mystically effective. Nehru is India's magnetic man of the moment.

"The people listen to Nehru", says Lin Yutang, "Nehru listens to Gandhi, and Gandhi listens only to God." Thus Nehru is an effective bridge between Gandhi and the people as Gandhi is the only bridge between Nehru and God. That is an enviable position which Jawaharlal occupies in the spiritual hierarchy of India. We must understand Gandhi before we can reach God and we must understand Nehru before we can comprehend Gandhi.

That gives a unique position to the utterances of Jawaharlal Nehru. He is the best interpreter of Mahatma Gandhi and the finest mouthpiece of India's aspirations. In this book we have presented all the best and most important speeches of Jawaharlal since he fell under the fascination of Mahatma Gandhi, cast his lot in with him and adopted non-violence as the guiding star of his life.

As the reader runs through this book he will find a sharp contrast between the mysticism of Gandhi and the materialism of Nehru. Gandhi comes from heaven to earth, Nehru goes from earth to heaven!

*Further suggestions and speeches of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru from our readers and patrons and admirers of Pandit Nehru are welcome and will be thankfully accepted by the Publishers.*

J. S. B.

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# CHAPTER I

# India And The World

**[The world to-day stands on the brink of mighty convulsions. Jawaharlal has declared in unmistakable terms that the peoples of the world are facing more thunderous changes than ever witnessed by humanity since the dawn of civilization. We are living in the age of the atomic bomb, he says, which has changed the very conception of human existence. In this connection, it is worth while to read Pandit Nehru's presidential address at Lucknow in the 49th Session of the Congress on April 12, 1936, when the Nationalists were weighing the pros and cons of plunging into the battle of elections. The presidential address of Jawaharlal is prophetic, because the political doctrines which he formulated are more true to-day, when the world has come out of a baptism of fire than they were in 1936 when the rumblings of war in Europe were pretty far off. The speech is a magnificent document of democracy, nutshelling the past, present and future of nationalism in India.]**

COMRADES !

After many years I face you again from this tribune, many weary years of strife and turmoil and common suffering. *It is good for us to meet again, it is good for me to see this great host of old comrades and friends, linked together by strong bonds that cannot break, to sense the old brave spirit yet again, to feel your overwhelming kindness and goodwill to one whose greatest privilege it*

*is to have been a comrade and a soldier with all of you in a mighty struggle for freedom.* I am heartened and strengthened by you, though even in this great gathering I feel a little lonely. Many a dear comrade and friend has left us, worn out, long before the normal length of our earthly days, by the stress and strain of conflict. One by one they go, leaving a void in our hearts and a dull misery in our minds. They find peace from this turmoil perhaps, and it is well, for they deserved it. They rest after their labours.

But what of us who remain behind with a heavier burden to carry ? **There is no rest for us or for those who languish in prison or in detention camp. We cannot rest, for rest is betrayal of those who have gone and in going handed the torch of freedom to us to keep alight ; it is betrayal of the cause we have espoused and the pledge we have taken ; it is betrayal of the millions who never rest.**

I am aweary and I have come back like a tired child yearing for solace in the bosom of our common mother, India. That solace has come to me in overflowing measure, thousands of hands have been stretched out to me in love and sympathy, millions of silent voices have carried their message of affection to my heart. How can I thank you, men and women of India ? How can I express in words feelings that are too deep for utterance ?

For many years now I have been a distant looker-on on this Indian scene where once I was an actor, and many a thing has happened that has filled me with distress and anguish. I do not wish to survey this recent past of ours, which must be fresh in your memory, and which has left a sorry trail behind and many knots which are difficult to unravel. But we may not ignore it for out of that past as well as the present, we have to build our future. We have followed high ideals and we have taken pride in the fact that our means are worthy of those ideals. We have been witnesses of many a miracle in this old and battered land of ours and yet our very success has been followed by failure and disillusion. *Temporary failure has little significance when the aim is high and the struggle bound to be a long one ; it is but the incentive to further effort. Often it teaches us more than a victory easily won and becomes a prelude to a greater success. But we profit by it only if we learn its lesson and search our minds for an explanation of that failure.* Only by constant self-questioning, individual and national, can we keep on the right path. An easy and

unthinking confidence is almost as bad as a weak submission to helpless dejection. Real failure comes only when we forget our ideals, objectives and principles and begin to wander away from the road which leads to their realization.

In this crisis of our history, therefore, let us look into ourselves and examine, without pity or prejudice, what we have done and what others have done to us, and seek to find out where we stand to-day. We dare not delude ourselves or evade real issues for fear of offending others, even though some of these others are comrades whom we respect. That is the way of self-deception which none who seek great and vital changes can follow except at their peril.

Sixteen years ago, under the inspiration of our leader, we took a new and long step converting the Congress from an ineffective body, feebly functioning amongst the upper classes, inro a powerful demoratic organization with its roots in the Indian soil and the vast masses who live on it. A handful of our old friends, representing an age and a class which had had its day, left us, fearful of this democratic upsurge, and preferring the shelter and protection of British imperialism to joining hands with the new vital forces which convulsed the country and struggled for freedom. Historically they lapsed into the past. But we heard the rumbling of those forces and, for the moment, lined up with them and played a not unworthy part in current history. We sensed the new spirit of mass release, of psychological escape from the cramping effects of long subjection; we gloried in the breaking of the mental bonds that ecompassed us. And because our minds became free we felt that political freedom could not be far, for it is often harder to break the bonds of the spirit than physical bonds and chains of iron and steel. We represented the Spirit of the Age and were marching step by step with countless others in our country and outside. The exhilaration of being in tune with the masses and with world forces came upon us and the feeling that we were the agents of historic destiny.

We were engrossed in our national struggle and the turn it took before the powerful impress of our great leader and of our national genius. We were hardly conscious then of what was happening outside. And yet our struggle was but part of a far wider struggle for freedom, and the forces that moved us were moving millions of people all over the world and driving them into action. All Asia was astir from the Mediterranean to the Far East, from the

Islamic West to the Buddhist East ; Africa responded to the new spirit ; Europe, broken up by the war, was struggling to find a new equilibrium. And right across a vast area in Europe and Asia, in the Soviet territories, a new conception of human freedom and social equality fought desparately against a host of enemies. There were great differences in the many aspects of this freedom struggle all over the world, and we were misled by them and did not see the common background. Yet if we are to understand these varied phenomena, and derive a lesson from them for our own national struggle, we must try to see and understand the whole picture. And if we do so, we cannot fail to observe an organic connection between them which endures through changing situations. If once we grasp this organic bond, the world situation becomes easier to understand and our own national problems take their proper places in the wider picture. We realise then that we cannot isolate India or the Indian problem from that of the rest of the world. To do so is to ignore the real forces that are shaping events and to cut ourselves adrift from the vital energy that flows from them. To do so, again, is to fail to undestand the significance of our own problems, and if we do not understand this, how can we solve them ? We are apt to lose ourselves, as we have indeed done, in petty conflicts and minor questions like the communal problem, and forget the major issues ; we are apt to waste our energy (as our moderate friends do) in interminable discussions over legal quibbles and constitutional questions.

During the troubled aftermath of the Great War came revolutionary changes in Europe and Asia, and the intensification of the struggle for social freedom in Europe, and a new aggressive nationalism in the countries of Asia. There were ups and downs, and sometimes it appeared as if the revolutionary urge had exhausted itself and things were settling down. But economic and political conditions were such that there could be no settling down, the existing structure could no longer cope with these new conditions, and all its efforts to do so were vain and fruitless. Everywhere conflicts grew and a great depresion overwhelmed the world and there was a progressive deterioration, everywhere except in the wide-flung Soviet territories of the U.S S.R., where, in marked contrast with the rest of the world, astonishing progress was made in every direction. Two rival economic and political systems faced each other in the world and, though they tolerated each other for a while, there

was an inherent antagonism between them, and they played for mastery on the stage of the world. One of them was the capitalist order which had inevitably developed into vast imperialisms, which, having swallowed the colonial world, were intent on eating each other up. Powerful still and fearful of war which might endanger their possessions, yet they came into inevitable conflict with each other and prepared feverishly for war. They were quite unable to solve the problems that threatened them and helplessly they submitted to slow decay. The other was the new socialist order of the U. S. S. R. which went from progress to progress, though often at terrible cost, and where the problems of the capitalist world had ceased to exist.

Capitalism, in its difficulties, took to Fascism with all its brutal suppression of what western civilization had apparently stood for ; it became, even in some of its homelands, what its imperialist counterpart had long been in the subject colonial countries. **Fascism and imperialism thus stood out as the two faces of the new decaying capitalism, and though they varied in different countries according to national characteristics and economic and political conditions, they represented the same forces of reaction and supported each other, and at the same time came into conflict with each other, for such conflict was inherent in their very nature.** Socialism in the West and the rising nationalisms of the eastern and other dependent countries opposed this combination of Fascism and Imperialism. Nationalism in the East, it must be remembered, was essentially different from the new and terribly narrow nationalism of fascist countries ; the former was the historical urge to freedom, the latter the last refuge of reaction.

**Thus we see the world divided up into two vast groups to-day—the Imperialist and Fascist on one side, the Socialist and nationalist on the other.** There is some overlapping of the two and the line between them is difficult to draw, for there is mutual conflict between the Fascist and Imperialist Powers, and the nationalism of subject countries has sometimes a tendency to Fascism. But the main division holds and if we keep it in mind, it will be easier for us to understand world conditions and our own place in them.

Where do we stand then, we who labour for a free India? Inevitably we take our stand with progressive forces of the world which are ranged against Fascism and Imperialism. We have to deal with one Imperialism in particular, the oldest and the most far-reaching of the modern world, but powerful as it

is, it is but one aspect of world-imperialism. And that is the final argument for Indian independence and for the severance of our connection with the British Empire. *Between Indian nationalism, Indian freedom and British imperialism there can be no common ground, and if we remain within the imperialist fold, whatever our name or status, whatever outward semblance of political power we might have, we remain cribbed and confined and allied to and dominated by the reactionary forces and the great financial vested interests of the capitalist world.* The exploitation of our masses will still continue and all the vital social problems that face us will remain unsolved. Even real political freedom will be out of our reach, much more so radical social changes.

With the development of this great struggle all over the world we have seen the progressive deterioration of many of the capitalist-imperialist countries and an attempt at consolidation of the reactionary forces under Fascism or Naziism or so-called 'National' Governments. In India the same process has been evident to view during these past years, and stronger the nationalist movement has grown, the more have efforts been made by our imperialist rulers to break our ranks and to gather together under their banner the reactionary elements in the country. The Round Table Conferences were such attempts and, though they helped our rulers in some measure, they served a useful purpose by showing us clearly the division between the imperialist and the anti-imperialist forces in the country. Unhappily we did not fully profit by this lesson and we still imagine that we can win over some of these imperialist groups to the side of Indian freedom and anti-imperialism, and in a vain attempt to do so, we suppress our ideals, blush for our objectives and tone down our activities.

Meanwhile the decay of British Imperialism in India becomes ever more apparent. It cannot, by its very nature, solve our economic problems and rid us of our terrible poverty, which it has largely itself created. It subsists on a normal fare of the fiercest repression and a denial of civil and even personal liberty. It surrounds us with a wide network of spies and, among the pillars of its administration, are the tribe of informers and agents provocateurs and the like. Its services try to seek comfort for their obvious deterioration and incompetence by perpetually singing songs of mutual adulation. Argument gives place to the policeman's baton and the soldier's bayonet and prison and detention camp, and even our extraordinary finances are justified by the methods of the bully. It is astonishing to

find to what depths of vulgarity our rulers have descended in their ardent desire to hold on to what they have got, and it is depressing, though perhaps inevitable, that some of our own countrymen, more interested in British Imperialism than the British themselves, should excel at this deplorable game. So wanting in mental equilibrium are they, so obsessed by fear of the Congress and the national movement it represents, that their wishes become thoughts, their thoughts inferences and their inferences facts, solemnly stated in official publications, and on which the majesty of the British Government rests in India and people are kept in prison and detention camp without charge or trial. Being interested in psychology, I have watched this process of moral and intellectual decay and realized, even more than I did previously, how autocratic power corrupts and degrades and vulgarizes. I have read sometimes the reports of the recent Assembly meetings and noted the great difference in tone and content between them and the Assembly of ten years ago. I have observed the forced attempts made to discredit the Congress by a reference to the Tilak Swaraj Fund with which I was connected for many years as Secretary of the Congress. But prepared as I was for much, even I was surprised at the insinuations made against our much-loved chief, Rajendra Babu, and the charges brought against the Behar Relief Fund. A mild criticism by me of official incompetence soon after the Behar earthquake was deeply resented probably because the truth of it was realised. Newspapers that criticized the official arrangements at a subsequent earthquake were heavily penalized or suppressed. All criticism hurts the sensitive skin of the Government and its reactions are quick and far-reaching. The more incompetent it grows the less it likes being told so. But this does not prevent it from indulging in reckless allegations about others.

This psychological aspect interests me even more than the more aggressive manifestations of British authority in India, for it throws light on much that has happened. *It shows us how a clear and definite fascist mentality has developed among our rulers and how closely allied is Imperialism to Fascism. How this fascist mentality has functioned in the recent past and is functioning to-day, I shall not go into now. You know well the horror of these years and of the nightmare that we h ve all experienced. We shall not easily forget it and if there are some who have been cowed down by it, there are others who have steeled themselves to a greater resolve to end this infamy in India.*

But of one thing I must say a few words for to me it is one of the most vital things that I value. That is the tremendous deprivation of civil liberties in India. A government that has to rely on the Criminal Law Amendment Act and similar laws, that suppresses the press and literature, that bans hundreds of organizations, that keeps people in prison without trial and that does so many other things that are happening in India to-day, is a government that has ceased to have even a shadow of a justification for its existence. I can never adjust myself to those conditions, I find them intolerable. And yet I find many of my own countrymen complacent about them, some even supporting them, some, who have made the practice of sitting on a fence into a fine art, being neutral when such questions are discussed. And I have wondered what there was in common between them and me and those who think like I do. *We in the Congress welcome all co-operation in the struggle for Indian freedom ; our doors are ever open to all who stand for that freedom and are against imperialism. But they are not open to the allies to imperialism and the supporters of repression and those who stand by the British Government in its suppression of civil liberty. We belong to opposite camps.*

Recently, as you know, we have had a typical example of the way Government functions in India in the warning issued to a dear and valued comrade of ours, Subhas Chandra Bose. We who know him also know how frivolous are the charges brought against him. But even if there was substance in them we could not tolerate willingly the treatment to which he has long been subjected. He did me the honour to ask me for advice and I was puzzled and perplexed, for it is no easy thing to advice another in such a matter, when such advice might mean prison. Subhas Bose has suffered enough at the cost of his health. Was I justified in adding to this mental and physical agony ? I hesitated and at first suggested to him to postpone his departure. But this advice made me unhappy and I consulted other friends and then advised him differently. I suggested that he should return to his homeland as soon as he could. But, it appears, that even before my advice reached him, he had started on his journey back to India.

This instance leads us to think of the larger problem, of the way the bogey of terrorism has been exploited by the Government to crush political activity and to cripple physically and mentally the fair province of Bengal. You

know that terrorism as such is practically non-existent now in Bengal or any part of India. **Terrorism is always a sign of political immaturity in a people, just as so-called constitutionalism, where there is no democratic constitution, is a sign of political senility.** Our national movement has long outgrown that immature stage, and even the odd individuals who have in the past indulged in terrorist acts have apparently given up that tragic and futile philosophy. The Congress, by its stress on peaceful and effective action, has drawn the youth of the country into its fold and all traces of terroristic activity would long have vanished but for the policy of the Government which feeds the roots out of which a helpless violence grows. But terrorism or no terrorism, a government which adopts the methods which have long prevailed in Midnapore and elsewhere in Bengal stands self-condemned. Similar methods have also long prevailed in the Frontier Province, although there is no hint of terroristic activity there, and that fine man and true, beloved of millions, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, still lies in prison. Excuses differ, but the real reason is the ever-growing fascist mentality of our rulers.

That is one side of the picture. What of us? *I have found a spirit of disunion spreading over the land, a strange malaise, and petty conflicts amongst old comrades growing ever bigger and interfering with all activity. We have forgotten for the moment the larger ideals we stood for and we quarrel over petty issues. We have largely lost touch with the masses and, deprived of the life-giving energy that flows from them, we dry up and weaken and our organization shrinks and loses the power it had.* First things must always come first and because we have forgotten this and argue and dispute over secondary matters, we are in danger of losing our bearings.

Every great struggle has its ups and downs and temporary failures. When such a setback occurs there is a reaction when the Fund of national energy is exhausted and has to be recharged. That happens again and again, and yet that is not an adequate explanation of all that has taken place. Our direct action struggles in the past were based on the masses, and especially the peasantry, but the backbone and leadership were always supplied by the middle classes, and this, under the circumstances, was inevitable. The middle classes are a vague group or groups; at the top a handful of them are closely allied to British imperialism; at the bottom are the dispossessed and

other groups who have been progressively crushed by economic circumstances and out of whose ranks come the advanced political workers and revolutionaries; in between are the centre groups, which tend often to side with the advanced elements, but which also have alliances with the upper groups and live in the hope of joining their superior ranks. *A middle class leadership is thus often a distracted leadership, looking in two directions at the same time. In times of crisis and struggle, when unity of aim and activity is essential, this two-faced leadership is bound to injure the cause and to hold back when a forward move is called for. Being too much tied up with property and the goods of this world, it is fearful of losing them, and it is easier to bring pressure on it and to exhaust its stamina.* And yet, paradoxically, it is only from the middle class intellectuals that revolutionary leadership comes, and we in India know that our bravest leaders and our stoutest comrades have come from the ranks of the middle classes. But by the very nature of our struggle, these front-rank leaders are taken away and the others who take their place tire and are influenced more by the static element of their class. That has been very evident during our recent struggle when our propertied classes were hit hard by the Government's drastic policy of seizure and confiscation of monies and properties, and were thus induced to bring pressure for the suspension of the struggle.

How is this problem to be solved then? Inevitably we must have middle-class leadership but this must look more and more towards the masses and draw strength and inspiration from them. The Congress must be not only for the masses, as it claims to be, but of the masses; only then will it really be for the masses. I have a feeling that our relative weakness to-day is due to a certain decay of our middle class elements and our divorce from the people at large. Our policies and ideas are governed far more by the middle class outlook than by a consideration of the needs of the great majority of the population. Even the problems that trouble us are essentially middle class problems, like the communal problem, which have no significance for the masses.

This is partly due, I think, to a certain historical growth during the last fifteen years to which we have failed to adapt ourselves, to a growing urgency of economic problems affecting the masses, and to a rising mass consciousness which does not find sufficient outlet through the Congress. This was not so in 1920 and later when there was an organic link between Con-

gress and the masses, and their needs and desires, vague as they were, found expression in the Congress. But as those needs and desires have taken more definite shape, they have not been so welcome to other elements in the Congress and that organic connection has gone. That, though regrettable, is really a sign of growth and, instead of lamenting it, we must find a new link and a new connection on a fresh basis which allows for growth of mass consciousness within the Congress. The middle class claim to represent the masses had some justification in 1920 ; it has much less to-day, though the lower middle classes have still a great deal in common with the masses.

Partly also our divorce from the people at large is due to a certain narrowness of our Congress constitution. The radical changes made in it fifteen years ago brought it in line with existing conditions then and it drew in large numbers and became an effective instrument of national activity. Though the control and background were essentially middle-class and city, it reached the remotest village and brought with it political and economic consciousness to the masses and there was widespread discussion of national issues in city and village alike. One could feel the new life pulsating through this vast land of ours and, as we were in harmony with it, we drew strength from it. The intense repression by the Government during later years broke many of our physical and outward bonds with our country-side. But something more than that happened. The vague appeal of earlier days no longer sufficed, and on the new economic issues that were forcing themselves on us, we hesitated to give a definite opinion. Worse even than the physical divorce, there was a mental divorce between the middle class elements and the mass elements. Our constitution no longer fitted in with changing conditions ; it lost its roots in the soil and became a matter of small committees functioning in the air. It still had the mighty prestige of the Congress name behind it and this carried it a long way, but it had lost the living democratic touch. It became a prey to authoritarianism and a battleground for rival cliques fighting for control, and, in doing so, stooping to the lowest and most objectionable of tactics. Idealism disappeared and in its place there came opportunism and corruption. The constitutional structure of the Congress was unequal to facing the new situation ; it could be shaken up anywhere almost by a handful of unscrupulous individuals. Only a broad democratic basis could have saved it and this was lacking.

Last year an attempt was made to revise the constitution in order to get rid of some of these evils. How far the attempt has succeeded or not, I am not competent to judge. Perhaps it had made the organization more efficient, but efficiency means little if it has no strength behind it, and strength, for us, can only come from the masses. The present constitution stresses still further the authoritarian side of the organization, and in spite of stressing rural representation does not provide effective links with the masses.

*The real problem for us is, how in our struggle for independence we can join together all the anti-imperialist forces in the country, how we can make a broad front of our mass elements with the great majority of the middle classes which stand for independence.* There has been some talk of a joint front but, so far as I can gather, this refers to some alliance among the upper classes, probable at the expense of the masses. That surely can never be the idea of the Congress and if it favours it, it betrays the interests it has claimed to represent, and loses the very reason for its existence. The essence of a joint popular front must be uncompromising opposition to imperialism, and the strength of it must inevitably come from the active participation of the peasantry and workers.

Perhaps you have wondered at the way I have dealt at some length with the background of international affairs and not touched so far the immediate problems that fill your minds. You may have grown impatient. But I am convinced that the only right way of looking at our own problem is to see them in their proper place in a world setting. **I am convinced that there is intimate connection between world events, and our national problem is but a part of the world problem of capitalist-imperialism.** To look at each event apart from the others and without understanding the connection between them must lead us to the formation of erratic and erroneous views. Look at the vast panorama of world change to-day, where mighty forces are at grips with each other and dreadful war darkens the horizon. Subject peoples struggling for freedom and imperialism crushing them down; exploited classes facing their exploiters and seeking freedom and equality. Italian imperialism bombing and killing the brave Ethiopians; Japanese imperialism continuing its aggression in North China and Mongolia; British

imperialism piously objecting to other countries misbehaving, yet carrying on in much the same way in India and the Frontier ; and behind it all a decaying economic order which intensifies all these conflicts. Can we not see an organic connection in all these various phenomena ? *Let us try to develop the historic sense so that we can view current events in proper perspective and understand their real significance. Only then can we appreciate the march of history and keep step with it.*

I realize that in this address I am going a little beyond the usual beat of the Congress President. But I do not want you to have me under any false pretences and we must have perfect frankness with each other. Most of you must know my views on social and economic matters, for I have often given expression to them. Yet you chose me as President. I do not take that choice to mean an endorsement by you all, or by a majority, of those views, but I take it that this does mean that those views are spreading in India and that most of you will be indulgent in considering them at least.

*I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems lies in socialism, and when I use this word I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific, economic sense.* Socialism is, however, something even more than an economic doctrine ; it is a philosophy of life and as such also it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vested interests in land and industry, as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian States system. That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a higher ideal of co-operative service. It means ultimately a change in our instincts, habits and desires. In short, it means a new civilization, radically different from the present capitalist order. Some glimpse we can have of this new civilization in the territories of the U. S. S. R. Much has happened there which has pained me greatly and with which I disagree, but I look upon that great and fascinating unfolding of a new order and a new civilization as the most promising feature of our dismal age. *If the future is full of hope it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done, and I am convinced that, if some world catastrophe does not intervene, this new*

*civilization will spread to other lands and put an end to the wars and conflicts which capitalism feeds.*

I do not know how or when this new order will come to India. I imagine that every country will fashion it after its own way and fit it in with its national genius. But the essential basis of that order must remain and be a link in the world order that will emerge out of the present chaos.

**Socialism is thus for me not merely an economic doctrine which I favour, it is a vital creed which I hold with all may head and heart.** I work for Indian independence because the nationalist in me cannot tolerate alien domination; I work for it even more because for me it is the inevitable step to social and economic change. I should like the Congress to become a socialist organization and to join hands with the other forces that in the world are working for the new civilization. But I realize that the majority in the Congress, as it is constituted to-day, may not be prepared to go thus far. We are a nationalist organization and we think and work on the nationalist plan. It is evident enough now that this is too narrow even for the limited objective of political independence and so we talk of the masses and their economic needs. But still most of us hesitate, because of our nationalist backgrounds, to take a step which might f.ighten away some vested interests. Most of those interests are already ranged against us and we can expect little from them except opposition even in the political struggle.

Much as I wish for the advancement of socialism in this country, I have no desire to force the issue in the Congress and thereby create difficulties in the way of our struggle for independence. I shall co-operate gladly and with all the strength in me with all those who work for independence even though they do not agree with the socialist solution. But I shall do so stating my position frankly and hoping in course of time to convert the Congress and the country to it, for only thus can I see it achieving independence. It should surely be possible for all of us who believe in independence to join our ranks together even though we might differ on the social issue. The Congress has been in the past a broad front representing various opinions joined together by that common bond. It must continue as such even though the difference of those opinions becomes more marked.

**How does socialism fit in with the present ideology of the Congress ? I do not think it does. I believe in the rapid industrialization of the country and only thus I think will the standards of the people rise substantially aad poverty be combatted.** Yet I have co-operated whole-heartedly in the past with the *khadi* programme and I hope to do so in the future because I believe that *khadi* and village industries have a definite place in our present economy. They have a social, a political and an economic value which is difficult to measure but which is apparent enough to those who have studied their effects. But I look upon them more as temporary expedients of a transition stage rather than as solutions of our vital problems. That transition stage might be a long one, and in a country like India, village industries might well play an important, though subsidiary, role even after the development of industrialism. But though I co-operate in the village industries programme, my ideologic approach to it differs considerably from that of many others in the Congress who are opposed to industrialization and socialism.

*The problem of untouchability and the Harijans again can be approached in different ways. For a socialist it presents no difficulty, for under socialism there can be no such differentiation or victimization. Economically speaking, the Harijans have constituted the landless proletariat and an economic solution removes the social barriers that custom and tradition have raised.*

I come now to a question which is probably occupying your minds—the new Act passed by the British Parliament and our policy in regard to it. This Act has come into being since the last Congress met, but even at that time we had had a foretaste of it in the shape of the White Paper, and I know of no abler analysis of those provisions than that contained in the presidential address of my predecessor in this high office. The Congress rejected that proposed constitution and resolved to have nothing to do with it. The new Act, as is well known, is an even mere retrograde measure and has been condemend by even the most moderate and cautious of our politicians. If we rejected the White Paper, what then are we to do with this new charter of slavery, to strengthen the bonds of imperialist domination and to intensify the exploitation of our masses ? And even if we forget its content for a while, can we forget the insult and injury that have accompanied it, the contemptuous defiance of our wishes, the

suppression of civil liberties and the widespread repression that has been our normal lot? If they had offered to us the crown of heaven with this accompaniment and with dishonour, would we not have spurned it as inconsistent with our national honour and self-respect? What then of this?

*A charter of slavery is no law for the slave, and though we may perforce submit for a while to it and to the humiliation of ordinances and the like, inherent in that enforced submission is the right and the desire to rebel against it and to end it.*

Our lawyers have examined this new constitution and have condemned it. But constitutions are something much more than legal documents. "The real constitution," said Ferdinand Lassalle, consists of "the actual relationships of power," and the working of this power we see even to-day, after the Act has been passed. That is the constitution we have to face, not the fine phrases which are sometimes presented to us, and we can only deal with it with the strength and power generated by the people of the country.

To this Act our attitude can only be one of uncompromising hostility and a constant endeavour to end it. How can we do this?

Since my return from Europe I have had the advantage of full and frank discussion with my colleagues of the Working Committee. All of us have agreed that the Act has to be rejected and combatted, but all of us have not been able to agree to the manner of doing so. We have pulled together in the past and I earnestly hope that we shall do so in the future, but in order to do so effectively we must recognise that there are marked differences in our outlooks. I do not yet know, as I write, what the final recommendation of the Working Committee will be on this issue. I can only, therefore, venture to put before you my own personal views on the subject, not knowing how far they represent the views of Congressmen. I should like to make it clear, however, in fairness to my old colleagues of the Working Committee, that the majority of them do not agree with all the views I am going to express. But whether we agree or disagree, or whether we agree to differ, there is a strong desire on our part to continue to co-operate together, laying stress on our many points of agreement rather than on the differences. That is the right course for us and, as a demo-

cratic organization, that is the only course open to us.

**I think that under the circumstances, we have no choice but to contest the elections to the new provincial legislatures, in the event of their taking place. We should seek election on the basis of a detailed political and economic programme, with our demand for a Constituent Assembly in the forefront.** I am convinced that the only solution of our political and communal problems will come through such an Assembly, provided it is elected on an adult franchise and a mass basis. That Assembly will not come into existence till at least a semi-revolutionary situation has been created in this country, and actual relationships of power, apart from paper constitution, are such that the people of India can make their will felt. When that will happen I cannot say, but the world is too much in the grip of dynamic forces to-day to admit of static conditions in India or elsewhere for long. We may thus have to face this issue sooner than we might expect. But, obviously, a Constituent Assembly will not come through the new Act or the new legislatures. Yet we must press this demand and keep it before our country and the world, so that when the time comes we may be ripe for it.

A Constituent Assembly is the only proper and democratic method for the framing of our constitution, and for its delegates then to negotiate a treaty with the representatives of the British Government. But we cannot go to it with blank minds in the hope that something good will emerge out of it. Such an Assembly, in order to be fruitful, must have previous thought behind it and a definite scheme put forward by an organized group. The actual details, as to how the Assembly is to be convened, must depend on the circumstances then existing and need not trouble us now. But it will be our function as the Congress, to know exactly what we are after, to place this clearly and definitely before the Assembly, and to press for its acceptance.

*One of the principal reasons for our seeking election will be to carry the message of the Congress to the millions of voters and to the scores of millions of the disfranchised, to acquaint them with our future programme and policy, to make the masses realize that we not only stand for them but that we are of them and seek to co-operate with them in removing their social and economic burdens.* Our appeal and message will not be limited to the voters, for we must remember that hundreds of millions are

disfranchised and they need our help most for they are at the bottom of the social ladder and suffer most from exploitation. We have seen in the past widespread official interference in the elections; we shall have to face that, as well as the rich and monied ranks of the reactionaries. But the real danger will come from our toning down our programme and policy in order to win over the hesitating and compromising groups and individuals. If we compromise on principles, we shall fall between two stools and deserve our fall. The only right way and the only safe way is to stand four-square on our own programme and to compromise with no one who has opposed the national struggle for freedom in the past, or who is in any way giving support to British Imperialism.

When we have survived the election, what then are we to do? Office or no office? A secondary matter perhaps, and yet behind that issue lie deep questions of principle and vital differences of outlook, and a decision on that, either way, has far-reaching consequences. Behind it lies, somewhat hidden, the question of independence itself and whether we seek revolutionary changes in India or are working for petty reforms under the aegis of British imperialism. *We go back again in thought to the clash of ideas which preceded the changes in the Congress in 1920. We made a choice then deliberately and with determination and discarded the old sterile creed of reformism. Are we to go back again to that blind and suffocating lane after all these years of brave endeavour, and to wipe out the memory of what we have done and achieved and suffered?* That is the issue and let none of us forget it when we have to give our decision. In this India, crying aloud for radical and fundamental change, in this world pregnant with revolutionary and dynamic possibility, are we to forget our mission and our historic destiny, and slide back to static futility? And if some of us feel tired and hunger for rest and quiet, do we imagine that India's masses will follow our lead, when elemental forces and economic necessity are driving them to their inevitable goal? If we enter the back waters, others will take our place on the bosom of the flowing stream and will dare to take the rapids and ride the torrent.

How has this question arisen? If we express our hostility to the Act and reject the entire scheme, does it not follow logically that we should have nothing to do with the working of it and should prevent its functioning, in so far as we can? To accept office and ministry, under the conditions of the Act, is to negative our rejection of it and

to stand self-condemned. National honour and self-respect cannot accept this position, for it would inevitably mean our co-operation in some measure with the repressive apparatus of imperialism, and we would become partners in this repression and in the exploitation of our people. Of course, we would try to champion the rights of the people and would protect against repression, but as ministers under the Act, we could do very little to give relief, and we would have to share responsibility for the administration with the apparatus of imperialism, for the deficit budgets, for the suppression of labour and the peasantry. **It is always dangerous to assume responsibility without power, even in democratic countries ; it will be far worse with this undemocratic constitution, hedged in with safeguards and reserved powers and mortgaged funds, where we have to follow the rules and regulations of our opponents' making.** Imperialism sometimes talks of co-operation but the kind of co-operation it wants is usually known as surrender, and the ministers who accept office will have to do so at the price of surrender of much that they might have stood for in public. That is a humiliating position which self-respect itself should prevent one from accepting. For our great national organization to be party to it is to give up the very basis and background of our existence.

Self-respect apart, common sense tells us that we can lose much and gain little by acceptance of office in terms of the Act. We cannot get much out of it, or else our criticism of the Act itself is wrong, and we know that it is not so. The big things for which we stand will fade into the background and petty issues will absorb our attention and we shall lose ourselves in compromises and communal tangles, and dissillusion with us will spread over the land. If we have a majority, and only then can the question of acceptance of office arise, we shall be in a position to dominate the situation and to prevent reactionaries and imperialists from profitting by it. Office will not add to our real strength, it will only weaken us by making us responsible for many things that we utterly dislike.

**Again, if we are in a minority, the question of office does not arise. It may be, however, that we are on the verge of a majority and with the co-operation of other individuals and groups we can obtain office. There is nothing inherently wrong in our acting together with others on specific issues of civil liberty or economic or other demands, provided we do not compromise on any**

**principle.** But I can imagine few things more dangerous and more likely to injure us than the acceptance of office on the sufferance of others. That would be an intolerable position.

It is said that our chances at the elections would increase if we announced that we were prepared to accept offices and ministries. Perhaps that might be so for all manner of other people, eager for the spoils and patronage that office gives, would then hurry to join us. Does any Congressman imagine that this would be desirable development or that we would gain strength thereby? Again it is said that more voters would vote for us if they knew that we were going to form ministries. That might happen if we deluded them with false promises of what we might do for them within the Act; but a quick nemesis would follow our failure to give effect to those promises, and failure would be inevitable if the promises were worth while.

There is only one straight course open to us to go to the people with our programme and make it clear to them that we cannot give effect to the major items in it under present conditions, and, therefore, while we use the platform of the legislatures to press that programme, we seek to end these imperialist bodies by creating deadlocks in them when we are in a position to do. Those deadlocks should preferably take place on those programmes so that the masses might learn how ineffective for their purposes are these legislatures.

One fact is sometimes forgotten—the provision for second chambers in many of the provinces. These chambers will be reactionary and will be exploited by the Governor to check any forward tendencies in the lower house. They will make the position of a minister, who seeks advance, even more difficult and uneviable.

Some people have suggested, though their voices are hushed now, that provincial autonomy might be given on this office issue and each Provincial Congress Committee should be empowered to decide it for its own province. An astonishing and fatal suggestion playing into the hands of our imperialist rulers. **We who have laboured for Indian unity can never be parties to any proposal which tends to lessen that unity. That way lies disaster and a disruption of the forces working for freedom.** If we agree to this, why then should we also not agree to the commanal-

issue being decided provincially, or many other issues, where individual provinces might think differently? First issues will sink into the background, independence itself will fade away, and the narrowest provincialism raise its ugly head. Our policy must be uniform for the whole of India, and it must place first things first, and independence is the first thing of all.

So that I am convinced that for the Congress to favour the acceptance of office, or even to hesitate and waver about it, would be a vital error. It will be a pit from which it would be difficult for us to come out. Practical statesmanship is against it, as well as the traditions of the Congress and the mentality we have sought to develop in the people. Psychologically, any such lead might have disastrous consequences. If we stand for revolutionary changes, as we do, we have to cultivate a revolutionary mentality among our people, and anything that goes against it is harmful to our cause.

This psychological aspect is important. We must never forget, and never delude our masses into imagining, that we can get any real power or real freedom through working these legislatures. We may use them certainly to advance our cause to some extent, but the burden of the struggle for freedom must fall on the masses, and primarily, therefore, our effective work must lie outside these legislatures. Strength will come from the masses and from our work among them and our organization of them.

Of secondary importance though the work in the legislature is, we may not treat it casually and allow it to become a hindrance to our other work. Therefore it is necessary for the Congress, through its executive to have direct control over the elections and the programme placed before the country, as well as the activity in the legislatures. Such control will inevitably be exercised through committees and boards appointed for the purpose, but the continued existence of semi-autonomous parliamentary boards seems to be undesirable. Provision should also be made for a periodical review of all such activities so that Congressmen in general and the country should keep in touch with them and should influence them.

We have considered the provincial elections which, it is said, may take place early next year. The time is

far off yet and it is by no means impossible that these elections may not take place for a much longer time, or may not take place at all, and the new Act may take its rightful place in oblivion. Much may happen in the course of the next year, and war is ever on the horizon, to upset the schemes and time-tables of our rulers. But we cannot speculate on this and we have to make provision for contingencies. That decision might even have been delayed, but dangerous and compromising tendencies seek to influence Congress policy, and the Congress cannot remain silent when the issue is raised and its whole future is in the balance.

The provincial legislatures may come, but few persons, I imagine, are confident about the coming of the federal part of this unholy structure. So far as we are concerned we shall fight against it to our utmost strength, and the primary object of our creating deadlock in the provinces and making the new Act difficult of functioning, is to kill the Federation. **With the Federation dead, the provincial end of the Act will also go and leave the slate clean for the people of India to write on. That writing, whatever it be, can never admit the right of the Indian States to continue as feudal and autocratic monarchies.** They have long survived their day, propped up by an alien powers, and have become the strangest anomalies in a changing world. The future has no place for autocracy or feudalism ; a free India cannot tolerate the subjection of many of our children and their deprivation of human rights, nor can it ever agree to a dissection of its body and a cutting up of its limbs. If we stand for any human, political, social or economic right for ourselves, we stand for those identical rights for the people of the States.

I have referred to the terrible suppression of civil liberties by the British Government in India. But in the States matters are even worse, and though we know that the real power behind those States is that of British imperialism, this tragic suppression of our brothers by their own countrymen is of painful significance. Indian rulers and their ministers have spoken and acted increasingly in the approved fascist manner, and their record during the past few years especially has been one of aggressive opposition to our national demands. States, which are considered advanced, ban the Congress organization and offer insult to our national flag, and decree new laws to suppress the Press. What shall we

say of the more backward and primitive States ?

There is one more matter concerning the Constitution Act which has given rise to much controversy. This is the communal decision. Many people have condemned it strongly and, I think rightly, few have a good word for it. My own view point is, however, somewhat different from that of others. I am not concerned so much with what it gives to this group or that, but more so with the basic idea behind it. It seeks to divide India into numerous separate compartments, chiefly on a religious basis, and thus makes the development of democracy and economic policy very difficult. Indeed the communal decision and democracy can never go together. We have to admit that, under present circumstances, and so long as our politics are dominated by middle class elements, we cannot do away with communalism altogether. But to make a necessary exception in favour of our Muslim or Sikh friends is one thing, to spread this evil principle to numerous other groups and thus to divide up the electoral machinery and the legislature into many compartments, is a far more dangerous proposition. If we wish to function democratically the proposed communal arrangement will have to go, and I have no doubt that it will go. But it will not go by the methods adopted by the aggressive opponents of the decision. These methods result inevitably in perpetuating the decision, for they help in continuing a situation which prevents any reconsideration.

I have not been enamoured of the past Congress policy in regard to the communal question and its attempts to make pacts and compromises. Yet essentially I think it was based on a sound instinct. First of all the Congress always put independence first and other questions, including the communal one, second, and refused to allow any of those other questions to take pride of place. Secondly, it argued that the communal problem had arisen from a certain set of circumstances which enabled the third party to exploit the other two. In order to solve it, one had either to get rid of the third party (and that meant independence), or get rid of that set of circumstances, which meanta friendly approach by the parties concerned and an attempt to soften the prejudice and fear that filled them. Thirdly, that the majority community must show generosity in the matter to allay the fear and suspicion that minorities, even though unreasonably, might have.

That analysis is, I think, perfectly sound. **I would add that, in my opinion, a real solution of the problem will only come when economic issues, affecting all religious groups**

**and cutting across communal boundaries, arise.** Apart from the upper middle classes who live in hopes of office and patronage, the masses and the lower middle classes have to face identical political and economic problems. It is odd and significant that all the communal demands of any group, of which so much is heard, have nothing whatever to do with these problems of the masses and the lower middle classes.

It is significant that the principle communal leaders, Hindu or Muslim or others, are political reactionaries, quite apart from the communal question. It is sad to think how they have sided with British imperialism in vital matters, how they have given their approval to the suppression of civil liberty, how during these years of agony they sought to gain narrow profit for their group at the expense of the larger cause of freedom. With them there can be no co-operation, for that would mean co-operation with reaction. But I am sure that with the larger masses and the middle classes, who may have temporarily been led away by the spacious claims of their communal leaders, there must be the fullest co-operation, and out of that co-operation will come a fairer solution of this problem.

I am afraid I cannot get excited over this communal issue, important as it is temporarily. It is after all a side issue and it can have no real importance in the larger scheme of things. Those who think of it as the major issue, think in terms of British imperialism continuing permanently in this country. Without that basis of thought, they would not attach so much importance to one of its inevitable off-shoots I have no such fear and so my vision of a future India contains neither imperialism nor communalism.

Yet the present difficulty remains and has to be faced. Especially our sympathy must go to the people of Bengal who have suffered most from these communal decisions, as well as from the heavy hand of the Government. Whenever opportunity offers to improve their situation in a friendly way, we must seize it. But always the background of our action must be the national struggle for independence and the social freedom of the masses.

I have referred previously to the growing divorce between our organization and the masses. Individually many of us still have influence with the masses and our world carries weight with them, and who can measure the

love and reverence of India's millions for our leader, Gandhiji? And yet organizationally we have lost that intimate touch that we had. The social reform activities of the *hhadi* and village industries and *Harijan* organizations keep large numbers of our comrades in touch with the masses and those contacts bear fruit. But they are essentially non-political and so, politically, we have largely lost tou)h. There are many reasons for this and some are beyond our control. Our present Congress Constitution is, I feel, not helpful in developing these contacts or in encouraging enough the democratic spirit in its primary committees. These committees are practically rolls of voters who meet only to elect delegates or representatives, and take no part in discussion or the formation of policy.

It is interested to read in that monumental and impressive record, Webbs' New Book on Russia, how the whole Soviet structure is based on a wide and living democratic foundation. **Russia is not supposed to be a democratic country after the western pattern, and yet we find the essentials of democracy present in far greater degree amongst them than anywhere else.** The six hundred thousand towns and villages there have a vast democratic organization, each with its own Soviet, constantly discussing, debating, criticizing, helping in the formulation of policy, electing representatives to higher committees. This organization of citizens covers the entire population over 18 years of age. There is yet another vast organization of the people as producers, and a third, equally vast, as consumers. And thus scores of millions of men and women are constantly taking part in the discussion of public affairs and actually in the administration of the country. There has been no such practical application of the democratic process in history.

All this is of course utterly beyond us, for it requires a change in the political and economic structure and much else before we can experiment that way. But we can profit by that example still and try in our own limited way to develop democraey in the lowest rungs of the Congress ladder and make the primary committee a living organization.

An additional method for us to increase our contacts with the masses is to organize them as producers and then affiliate such organizations to the Congress or have full co-operation between the two. Such organizations of producers as exist to-day, such as trade unions and peasant unions, as well as other anti-imperialist organizations could

also be brought within this sphere of mutual co-operation for the good of the masses as for the struggle for national freedom. Thus Congress could have an individual as well as a corporate membership, and retaining its individual character, could influence, and be influenced by, other mass elements.

These are big changes that I have hinted at, and I am by no means sure how they can be brought about, or whether it is possible to go far in this direction in the near future. Still we must move to some extent at least if we are to have our roots in the soil of India and draw life and strength from its millions. The subjeet is fascinating but complicated and can only be tackled by an expert committee which, I trust, will be appointed on behalf of the Congress. The report of that committee must be freely discussed so as to get the widest backing for it.

All this will take us to the next Congress. Meanwhile perhaps some urgent changes are needed in our constitution to remove anomalies and avoid difficulties. Owing to my absence I have had little experience of the working of the new constitution and cannot make any concrete suggestions. The reduction in the numbers of delegates and A.I.C.C. members would be, to some extent, desirable if there was a background of widespread activity in the primary and secondary committees. Without it, it makes us even less responsive to mass opinion, and, therefore, an increase seems desirable. But the real solution is to increase the interest and day-to-day activity of the lower committees.

I have been told that the manual labour franchise has not been a success and has led to a great deal of evasion. If that is so, a change is desirable for a constitution must be such as can be worked easily and without subterfuge.

The Congress is an all-inclusive body and represents many interests, but essentially it is a political organization with various subsidiary and allied organizations, like the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries Association. These allied organizations work in the economic field, but they do not seek directly to remove the burdens of the peasantry under the present system of land tenure. Nor can the Congress, situated as it is, wholly function as a peasant organization, although in many provinces it has espoused the cause of the peasantry and brought them much

relief. *It seems to me necessary that the Congress should encourage the formation of the peasant unions as well as workers' unions, and co-operate with such as already exist, so that the day-to-day struggle of the masses might be carried on on the basis of their economic demands and other grievances.* This identification of the Congress with the economic struggle of the masses will bring us nearer to them and nearer to freedom than anything else. I would welcome also the organization of other special interests, like those of the women, in the general framework of our national struggle for freedom. The Congress would be in a position to co-ordinate all these vital activites and thus to base itself on the widest possible mass foundation.

*There has been some talk of a militant programme and militant action. I do not know what exactly is meant, but if direct action on a national scale or civil disobedience are meant, then I would say that I see no near prospect of them. Let us not indulge in tall talk before we are ready for big action. Our business to-day is to put s our house in order, to sweep away the defeatist mentality of iome people and to build up our organization with its mass affiliat ons, as well as to work amongst the masses. The time may come, and that sooner perhaps than we expect, when we might be put to the test. Let us get ready for that test. Civil disobedience and the like cannot be switched on and off when we feel like doing so.* It depends on many things, some of which are beyond our control, but in these days of revolutionary change and constantly recurring crises in the world, events often move faster than we do. We shall not look for opportunities.

The major problem of India to-day is that of the land—of rural poverty and unemployment and a thoroughly out-of-date land system. A curious combination of circumstances had held back India during the past few generations and the political and economic garments it wears no longer fit it and are torn and tattered. In some ways our agrarian conditions are not unlike those of France a hundred and fifty years ago prior to the greater revolution. They cannot continue so for long. At the same time we have become parts of international capitalism and we suffer the pains and crises which afflict this decaying system. As a result of these elemental urges and conflicts of world forces what will emerge in India none can say. But we can say with confidence that the present order has reached the evening of its day, and it is up to us to try to mould the future as we would like it to be.

The world is filled with rumours and alarms of war. In Abyssinia bloody and cruel war has already gone on for many months and we have watched anew how hungry and predatory imperialism behaves in its mad search for colonial domains. We have watched also with admiration the brave fight of the Ethiopians for their freedom against heavy odds. You will permit me, I feel sure, to greet them on your behalf and express our deep sympathy for them. Their struggle is something more than a local struggle. It is one of the first effective checks by an African people on an advancing imperialism and already it has had far-reaching consequences.

In the Far East also war hovers on the horizon and we see an eastern imperialism advancing methodically and pitilessly over ancient China and dreaming of world empire. Imperialism shows its claws wherever it may be, in the West or in the East.

In Europe an aggressive Fascism or Naziism steps continuously on the brink of war and vast armed camps arise in preparation for what seems to be the inevitable end of all this. Nations join hands to fight other nations, and progressive forces in each country ally themselves to fight the Fascist menaee.

Where do we come in in this awful game ? What part shall we play in this approaching tragedy ? It is difficult to say. But we must not permit ourselves to be passive tools exploited for imperialist ends. It must be our right to say whether we join a war or not, and without that consent there should be no co-operation from us. When the time comes we may have little say in the matter, and so it becomes necessary for the Congress to declare clearly now its opposition to India's participation in any imperialist war, and every war that will be waged by Imperialist Powers will be an imperialist war, whatever the excuse put forward might be. Therefore we must keep out of it and not allow Indian lives and Indian money to be sacrificed.

**To the progressive forces of the world, to those who stand for human freedom and the breaking of political and social bonds, we offer our full co-operation in their struggle against imperialism and fascist reaction, for we realize that our struggle is a common one.** Our

grievence is not against any people or any country as such, and we know that even in imperialist England, which throttles us, there are many who do not love imperialism and who stand for freedom.

During this period of difficulty and storm and stress, inevitably our minds and hearts turn to our great leader, who has guided us and inspired us by his dynamic personality these many years. Physical ill-health prevents him now from taking his full share in public activities. Our good wishes go out to him for his rapid and complete recovery, and with those wishes is the selfish desire to have him back again amongst us. We have differed from him in the past, and we shall differ from him in the future about many things, and it is right that each one of us should act up to his convictions. But the bonds that hold us together are stronger and more vital than our differences, and the pledges we took together still ring in our ears. How many of us have that passionate desire for Indian independence and the rising of our poverty-stricken masses which consumes him? Many things he taught us long years ago it seems now—fearlessness and discipline and the will to sacrifice ourselves for the larger cause. That lesson may have grown dim but we have not forgotten it, nor can we ever forget him who had made us what we are and raised India again from the depths. The pledge of independence that we took together still remains to be redeemed, and we await again for him to guide us with his wise counsel.

**But no leader, however great he be, can shoulder the burden single-handed ; we must all share it to the best of our ability and not seek helplessly to rely on others to perform miracles. Leaders come and go ; many of our best-loved captains and comrades have left us all too soon, but India goes on and so does India's struggle for freedom. It may be that many of us must suffer still and die so that India may live and be free. The promised land may yet be far from us and we may have to mark wearily through the deserts, but you will take away from us that deathless hope which has survived the scaffold and immeasurable suffering and sorrow ; who will dare to crush the spirit of India which has found re-birth again and again after so many crucifixions?**

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# CHAPTER II

# Political Travels

**[In order to grasp properly the speeches of Jawaharlal it is essential to visit the places and people where he went and to whom he spoke. This background is absolutely essential for a foreign reader and of great interest to an Indian worshipper of Nehru and his ideology. The following experiences of Jawaharlal are reminiscent of his whirlwind tours during the last elections by cart, car, cycle, wagon, horseback, on foot and aeroplane ! His average was thirty speeches a day. Once again, like prometheus, he is collecting his thunderbolts and "atomic bombs" for struggle for freedom !] :—**

As I journeyed from one valley to another, the railway crept along (for it went very slowly) between thick forests on either side ; almost impenetrable, so they seemed. They came right upto the railway line, leaving only a narrow passage grudgingly for us to pass through. Their million eyes seemed to look down with disdain on this human effort, and were full of the hostility of the forest against man, who had dared so much against it, and cleared it to enlarge his domain. *The call of the jungle and the mountain has always been strong within me, a dweller of cities and of plains though I am, and I gazed at these forests and jungles, fascinated and wondered what myriad forms of life and what tragedy they hid in their darkness. Bountiful nature or nature red in tooth and claw—was it much worse in these forest recesses than in the cities, and the dwelling-places of men ond women ? A wild animal kills for food to satisfy his hunger. He does not kill for sport or for the pleasure of killing. The fierce fights of jungle are individual*

*fights, not the mass murder than man calls war ; there is no wholesale destruction by bomb and poison gas. The comparison seemed to be all in favour of the forest of the wild animals.*

So I thought as I watched the pressing jungles. Gatherings of people at small stations and many tribal folk with gracious gifts of fruit and flowers, and cloth woven by themselves and fresh milk came to welcome me. Bright-eyed Naga children gave me garlands to wear. Some of these tribal people pressed some money on me also, coppers and nickel coins, for Congress work, they said. And I felt ashamed and humble before their clear gaze full of faith and affection. What of the cities with their selfishness and intrigues and money-grabbing ?

And so to our destination, and big crowds and rousing welcomes and *Bande Matram* shouted vigorously to the skies. A motor journey through the villages with crowds and welcome everywhere, and on to Silchar. The audience at the meeting there seemed to be bigger than what I had been told the population of the city was. Probably many people came from the villages. For three days I rushed about the valley, chiefly in the Sylhet District. As in the Assam Valley, the roads were generally bad and prodigious number of ferries had to be crossed. But the charm and beauty of the passing scenery held me, and made me forget the roads, and the warmth of the welcome from all manner of people sent a glow to my heart.

Sylhet was definitely Bengal. The language proclaimed it, so also the Zamindari tenants who came, and of whom a large number were Muslims. And yet it had much in common with their unhappy and helpless looking labourers. Excluded areas with tribal people. It was Bengal, but it seemed to possess a definite individuality of its own, hard to define, but something what was in the air.

**I was gratified by the enthusiasm for the Congress which the masses showed, and enthusiasm shared by the Muslims as well as the Hindus and even by the Tribal people.** Obviously good work had been done there in the past and the harvest was promising. It was pleasing also to find earnest workers in all parts of the district. Sylhet has a good number of them and the human material they deal with is also good. Much, therefore, can be expected of Sylhet. Unfortunately some local disputes have marred the good work, but these cannot be allowed to continue.

The cause is greater than the individual, and the worker who does not realize this has failed to learn the first lesson of a Congressman. But I have confidenee in Sylhet, in its people and in its Congress workers ; earnest and keen as they are and with a record of sacrifice for the cause behind them. And so, as I was leaving Sylhet, was asked for a message. I said "Go ahead, Sylhet !"

In the Bhanubil area of Sylhet I came across a large number of Manipuris. Hundreds of *charkhas* with Manipuri women and girls plying the wheel, sat there in ordered array to welcome me, and their men-folk and charming children stood by. I was surprised and pleased to see Manipuris and delighted to learn of the brave part they had taken in Civil Disobedience Movement. They had also had an economic No-tax Movement of their own, some years ago, when an attempt was made to enhance their rents.

**There were entirely new people, new to me and so different from all others I had seen in India. How little we knew of our own country and her children !** Their features were Mongoloid, they resembled somewhat the Burmese. Indeed the resemblances to the Burmese were many, and included the dress of their women-folk. They were, extraordinarily, neat and clean-looking, and the young girls with the laughter lurking in their eyes had quite a smart modern look. The children were charming, with their hair over their foreheads cut short and arranged neatly in front. These fascinating people were peasant-folk with little or no education, good spinners and weavers, taking pride in themselves. They were all Vaishnavas by religion, but even here some Burmese customs had crept in and as I was told their marriage could be dissolved.

In the hills between the two valleys there lies the state of Manipur, which is the centre of these people, and from there this Bhanubil Branch had migrated some generations back. Where did the original stock come from Burma or elsewhere I wondered. They were called bakward, I suppose, and yet with education and opportunity what could not be done with this attractive and intelligent-looking people ?

I have done a fair amount of flying in India, both in the north and in the south. But this was my first experience of flying during the monsoon, and I saw a new and pleasing

sight. Ordinarily the countryside looks dry and parched, and eyes get tired by the monotony of the landscape. Not so during the monsoon. *We all know how the monsoon brings welcome rain to the parched earth, and the greenery that blossoms at that magic touch. But to see this from on high brought home this change more vividly. Everything was green, though there were many shades to that greenery, and abundant water often flooded the fields. The trees stood out, cool and clean-looking and even the little villages that dotted the landscape lost some of their drab appearance. The eye rested, and lingered over this sight, and did not get tired. India seemed to be a green and pleasant land, rich in beauty and the wealth of its soil.*

We flew low, usually about five or six hundred feet, and the land rushed past us. Above us were the clouds, and we had to keep under them in order to avoid blind flying. And because we flew low, we saw the landscape in some detail and observed men and women working in the fields and cattle staying lazily on the pasture grounds. We could take in that picture from that height and while seeing a wide expanse of earth, yet be near enough to be of it. Sometimes a hill would approach us and we would just go over it, and leave it far behind. Sometimes rains poured down on us and battered on the glass screen. We did not worry much about it. Nor did we really mind air pockets, which made up jump. But when the clouds and mists began to envelop us flying low as we were, then my pilot was a little worried. When we reached Bamrauli, it was raining hard and a mist covered the aerodrome, so that it was difficult to distiguish it.

I had wanted to start early in the morning from Jamshedpur, and reach Lucknow in the forenoon at the latest. But reports of thunderstorms and high winds were not encouraging, and my pilot, an expert in his job, was in no mood to take risks. We postponed our departure till better report came, and eventually took off a little before noon. We flew fast with a following wind pushing us on. Towns and villages passed us and the river Sone and the Ganga with Benares in the distance. It had been good flying so far, with only occasional bumps. As we approached Allahabad, black and threatening clouds came nearer and nearer, and it was obvious that we were going into a big thunderstorm. Out of these clouds suddenly appeared an Imperial Airways flying boat, a little to our right, and sailed majestically by. It was big enough to go through

that storm, but our small plane was beginning to be buffeted.

Our pilot decided in favour of discretion and turned back to Benares. We landed there on the military aerodrome. After some waiting, which we utilized in filling up with petrol, we decided to venture up agaiu. But the ground did not have much of a way, and our plane felt heavy. So I dropped my luggage in Benares...... Thus lightened we flew easily enough and headed for Allahabad. As we approached the city, the low-flying clouds enveloped us and rain lessened the visibility still further, We crossed the Ganga and my eye spotted Anand Bhawan and Swaraj Bhawan and many other familiar landmarks. Even the Alfred Park looked singularly attractive from above, perhaps, because of the monsoon. We flew right over the High Court and I could see large number of men of law crowding in the verandahs to see this impertinent little plane rush by.

And so to Bamrauli in just half an hour from Benares. There was little chance of our going further by air that day, and I bade good-bye to our pilot, and the gallant iittle plane that had brought us, and decided regretfully to continue my journey to Lucknow by the solw-moving railway train. *The big air liners usually fly high. The K. L. M. has taken me* 18,000 *feet abovc sea-level, and flown over snow-covered Alps. We flew so high even, over the Dead Sea in Palestine that frost covered our window panes.* Once I had a curious experience in an Imperial Airways liner flying over the deserts of Sind. That was my first experience of long distance flying. It was early morning, and the dawn was stealing over the earth. I saw stretched out far below me a magnificent snow-field. There it was, stretching as far as I could see on every side of us, a glistening uniform mars of snow. I rubbed my eyes in amazement and looked again. There could be no mistaking it. But it was absurd to have snow in Sind. Was it cotton, wool, then, masses of it strewn on the ground ? That was an equally fantastic notion. We were flying high, and the sky above us was clear and blue. Below us also for some thousands of feet there was no cloud, and then there was this white shining mass apparently covering the ground. The mystery was solved soon enough when we came down five thousand feet and lost ourselves in she clouds. We emerged out of them, and under them, and found we were still flying nearly ten thousand feet above the ground. *Flying high one loses touch with the earth. It seems, distant, and*

*very few details are visible. A big river may be a silver streak, but even a mountain, unless it is very high, is hardly distinguishable from the low-lying land. There is a little sense of speed as one gets in a car or a railway train with objects rushing past us. But if a plane flies really low, under a hundred feet, then the earth simply rushes up and away.*

I imagine, though I have no definite data for this that the development of the Congress Movement aud of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the North-West Frontier Province had considerable influence on Kashmir during the last ten years. The two are adjoining neighbours and have many contracts, and yet the Afghans and the Kashmiris differ from each other markedly. It is surprising that such close neighbours, who have lived next to each other for nearly a thousand years, should differ so much physically, intellectually, culturally and emotionally. But inspite of these differences there is much in common and the political upheaval in the Frontier Province was bound to produce its reactions in Kashmir.

**I was exceedingly fortunate, therefore, in having as my companion during the Kashmir visit, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who has been the cause of this political awakening in the Frontier, and who symbolises it so much in his own person. It was obvious that he was a favourite of the Kashmiris, as he has become of people in all parts of India. "Fakhre-Afghan, or Badshah Khan, as he is popularly and affectionately known, was a delightful companion, though a hard taskmaster occasionally.**

*Both the Frontier Province and Kashmir adjoin the Punjab. Both complain that it is the communal spirit of the Punjab that creeps in and creates fiction and trouble, otherwise there would be communal harmony. This complaint is especially bitter against certain sections of the Punjab Press, both Hindu and Muslim-owned, which spread out into these adjoining territories, which have no proper newspaper of their own.*

As a reaction against this Press invasion from the Punjab, there is a tendency for Kashmir and the Frontier Province to hold together. These contacts are likely to grow, and I think they should grow to the mutual advantage of both.

I addressed many great gatherings in Srinagar and outside, but I had gone to Kashmir more to learn and to understand than to teach. Two of the Srinagar meetings I addressed were held under the auspices of the National

Conference, whose guest I was. Two others in Sringar were held under the auspices of the Yuvak Sabha—the organization of the Kashmiri Pandits. I spoke at some length on the minority problems at the Yuvak Sabha meeting. I need not repeat what I said then, for it has been said often enough, but I warned them not to fall into the trap into which minorities easily fall. I spoke frankly and freely for having been born in a Kashmiri Pandit family ; I could take liberties with my own people.

**While every individual and group deserved equal protection and help from the State, the idea of special safeguards for a minority group was full of peril for that group. For such safeguards led to dependence on extraneous help and weakened the group's spirit of self-reliance ; the special privileges amounted, in effect, to little but they created wells of prejudice which injured the group, and barriers which prevented growth.**

Above all, they led to a narrowness of outlook, and to isolation from national activities and the life-giving currents which moved the masses. At any time such safeguards and special protections were dangerous gifts to ask for or to receive. In the dynamic world of to-day with vast revolutionary changes taking place before our eyes, it was folly of the first order to imagine that such safeguards or privileges could hold and protect. Only strength of mind and purpose and unity of action could give some protection.

Safeguards and special protection might, perhaps, be needed by a group which was very backward educationally and economically. They were in the nature of crutches for the lame and halt. Why should those who were keen of mind and swift of foot require them ? No one had ever accused the Kashmiri Pandits of lack of intelligence or of ability to adapt themselves to a changing environment. All that they should demand was a free and open field for talent and ability.

I pointed out to them what an outstanding part Kashmiris, both Hindu and Muslim, had played in the whole of India, although they were small in numbers. In public life, professions, services, in the States, in cultural activities, they had done remarkably well, without the least help or protection from anybody. Many of the Muslim Kashmiris are not known as Kashmiris, and so people do not appreciate this fact. But as a matter of fact, Muslim Kashmiris are prominent in many walks of life in India.

One famous name stands out above all others, that of the poet, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, who was a Sapru.

Kashmiri Pandits are more recognised in India as Kashmiris. They have done astonishingly well, although in number they are probably under five thousand outside Kashmir. I told my audience with becoming modesty that during the fifty-five years of the life of the Indian National Congress, for seven years Kashmiri Pandits had been Presidents, a remarkable record for a handful of people who had migrated from Kashmir to the plains below.

The whole question of minorities and majorities in India is tied up with foreign and third party rule, and the basic aspect of this question changes. The process of elimination is going on now.

So I spoke, and said much else laying special stress on need for every group, if it was to count in the future, to throw its weight on the side of the masses, to join the national movement and draw strength and sustenance from it. No group or community which was continually shouting about itself, and demanding this and that special privilege or protection, would take much difference to the future that was being shaped. That future would be shaped without it.

The women's meeting was an extraordinary sight. It rained heavily throughout, and the meeting, was held in the open. I had imagined that the meeting would be abandoned. But four hours before the time of the meeting thousands of women gathered and stood in the pouring rain and when Badshah Khan and I got there, these girls and young women, and old women were standing in ankle-deep mud and water. I am partial to the women of Kashmir. They are beautiful and full of charm, and there was many a bright and intelligent face there in that eager audience. I spoke to them of women's problems, of what women had done and were doing in our national movement, of what their own kith and kin had done. And I urged them to rid themselves of the barriers of *Purdah*, where such existed and evil customs. The old orthodoxy must go, and the women of Kashmir, who were so eminently fitted in many ways, must play their part in the New India which we were all building together.

Wherever I went, these women of Kashmir came to welcome me and to treat me as a brother or a son. It was a joy to meet them and see them, and to see the affection in their eyes. At Mutton, old Kashmiri ladies came to bless me and kiss me on the forehead as mother does to her son.

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# CHAPTER III

## Articles of Faith

**[The following statement made by Pandit Nehru before the Court of the District Magistrate of Allahabad on May 17, 1922, sums of what may be regarded as the Ten Commandments of the great Indian hero. The Conviction of Jawahar Lal may be compared to the conviction of Jesus Christ and the trial of Socrates. When Nehru was being tried for "criminal intimidation and abetment of an attempt to extort," he gave expression to some of the sublimest sentiment of fight, faith and freedom. The statement shows that Jawaharlal is capable of rising into the highest firmament of ecstacy when fundamental human rights are molested.]**

I am making this statement not in order to defend myself against the various charges brought against me but to define my position and to state the motives which have induced me to act in the manner I have done. **I have refused to plead guilty or not guilty, and I have declined to participate in this trial by cross-examination of witnesses or otherwise. I have done so because I do not recognise this Court as a court where justice is administered.** I mean no disrespect to the presiding officer when I say that so far as political offences are concerned, the courts in India merely register the decrees of the executive. They are being used to-day even more than ever before to prop up the fabric of a government which has misgoverned India long enough and which has to resort to these tactics now in an attempt to restore a prestige which is gone for ever.

I stand here charged with criminal intimidation and abetment of an attempt to extort. The warrant of my arrest bears also the familiar section 124-A, although I am not being tried for it to-day. I propose, however, to make a comprehensive statement. I cannot divide myself up into various compartments, one for picketting, another for sedition and yet another perhaps for volunteering. All my activities have but one end in view and that I have striven to attain with all the strength and energy that is in me.

*Less than ten years ago, I returned from England after a lengthy stay there. I had passed through the usual course of public school and university. I had imbibed most of the prejudices of Harrow and Cambridge, and in my likes and dislikes I was perhaps more an Englishman than an Indian. I looked upon the world almost from an Englishman's standpoint. And so I returned to India as much prejudiced in favour of England and the English as it was possible for an Indian to be.*

To-day, ten years later, I stand here in the dock charged with two offences and with a third hovering in the background—an ex-convict who has been to jail once already for a political offence, and a rebel against the present system of government in India. That is the change which the years have wrought in me. It is not necessary for me to recite the reasons for this change. Every Indian knows them; every Indian has felt them and has hung his head in shame for them. And if he has retained a spark of the old fire in him, he has taken a solemn pledge to strive unceasingly for India's freedom, so that his countrymen may never again be subjected to the miseries and humiliations that are the lot of a subject people. To-day sedition against the present government in India has become the creed of the Indian people, to preach and practise disaffection against the evil which it represents, their chief occupation.

I am charged with criminal intimidation and attempted extortion. I have wondered if these charges were seriously meant. The sections of the code which have been applied bear no relation to the facts even as disclosed by the prosecution evidence. I presume that the signal success, that has attended our efforts in Allahabad, has induced the authorities to take some action against the picketters. If peaceful picketting for a lawful object is a crime, then, indeed, I am guilty of having advised it and helped

it. **But I have yet to learn that peaceful picketting has become an offence even under the laws of British India.** Our object in picketting was to make the cloth-dealers adhere to the pledge they had jointly taken. Does any one believe that we could achieve success in this by criminal intimidation and extortion? All the world knows that our strength lies in the support of our people and the good-will of our countrymen. **Our weapons are not the old time ones of force and coercion. The weapons which our great leader has put in our hands are those of love and self-sacrifice.** We suffer ourselves and by our suffering seek to convert our adversary.

Criminal intimidation involves a threat of injury to a person or his property, and injury denotes harm "illegally" caused. So also extortion must include the putting of any person in fear of "injury" and thereby "dishonestly" inducing him to part with property. I have listened to the prosecution evidence with interest in order to find out on what ground these novel charges were based. What was the injury to any person or property that was the harm "illegally" caused? Wherein lay the dishonesty of any of us? I have not heard a single allegation yet made, much less proved which suggests that we have caused injury to any person or property, caused any harm illegally or acted dishonestly. Not a single prosecution-witness, including the police and the C. I. D., has made such an allegation. In the whole of Allahabad there was found no person of the thousands who must have witnessed the picketting, who could bring the charge of any intimidation against us or even a harsh word uttered by one of our picketters. No greater proof of our triumph can be given than this unsought testimony of the police and the C. I. D. Our picketting has been, I make bold to say, a model of its kind, perfectly peaceful, perfectly courteous, relying on entreaties and exhortations and not even hinting at force or intimidation. The cloth-dealers, who are alleged to have been intimidated by us, are presumably the aggrieved party. But not one of them has complained.

Then months ago the cloth-dealers of Allahabad took a solemn pledge to refrain from purchasing foreign cloth till the end of 1922. All the signatories to the pledge, and they included almost every cloth-merchant in the city, constituted themselves into an association styled the Vyapari Mandal and elected office-bearers and a committee. The

first business of the Mandal was to lay down that every member who broke his pledge and purchased foreign cloth would have to pay a certain penalty and in case he refused to do this, picketting would be resorted to. The committee of the Mandal was to determine in each individual case how much foreign cloth had been brought and what the penalty was to be. On several occasions during the past year the Mandal Committee considered such breaches of the pledge and imposed and received fines in accordance with their rules. Occasionally at their request picketting was also resorted to. Two months ago a large quantity of foreign cloth was purchased by some of the cloth-dealers in Allahabad. This was in contravention of the pledge and the shops of some of these cloth-dealers were picketted. Later, the committee of the Vyapari Mandal newly-reconstituted, assessed the fines on the merchants who had broken their pledges and themselves collected this money, which lies at the disposal of the Mandal. To the best of my knowledge two of the gentlemen who have given evidence for the prosecution in this case are members of the Committee of the Mandal, and as such they must have themselves helped in the assessment and collection of the fines.

These are the facts relating to picketting in Allahabad. It is clear beyond doubt that there was neither any intimidation nor any attempt at extortion. The present prosecution is really an attempt to suppress lawful and peaceful picketting under cover of charges of intimidation and extortion. Picketting has been going on all over India for many months. It has taken place in many cities and bazars in the province. Here in this very city of Allahabad we have repeatedly resorted to it. And yet Government took no action against it as such. They knew well that in India as in England peaceful picketting is no crime. Of course, it is open to them by a stroke of the pen to make even peaceful picketting illegal. But whether they do so or not, give it up. To entreat and exhort and advise others to, they should follow a certain line of action or to abstain from doing something is a right which we will not abandon, whatever the Government may do. **We have few rights and privileges left in this country and even these are sought to be taken away.** We have shown to the world how we value the right of free association, and we have continued our volunteers in spite of thousands of arrests and all

Government notifications to the contrary. We will not and we cannot submit to any restriction of our right of free speech. A quarter of a century ago, a great English judge stated in the House of Lords with reference to this right of speech, "*A man has a right to say what he pleases, to induce, to exhort, to command, provided he does not slander to deceive or commit any other of the wrongs known to the law of which speech may be the medium. Unless he is thus shown to have abused his right, why is he to be called upon to excuse or justify himself because his words may interfere with some one else in his calling.*" This right of free speech we shall cling to, whatever the cost.

I am glad for many reasons that I am being tried for picketting. My trial will bring the question of the boycott of foreign cloth even more to the front, and I am confident that when the people of Allahabad and the province realise the full significance of this boycott, they will discard all foreign cloth, treat it as unholy and the touch of it almost as pollution. If they pondered over the evils and the misery and the poverty that foreign cloth has brought to this long-suffering country, perhaps they would feel some of the horror I feel, at the thought of wearing it. They will not bring forth arguments that old clothes have to be worn out or that festivities require fine clothing. They would know that the salvation of India and her hungry millions demanded the use of the *charkha* and the wearing of *khaddar*, and they would cast out all foreign cloth and consign them to the flames or to the dust bin. I pray that the cloth-merchants of Allahabad will adhere to their sacred pledges twice taken, and their utmost to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth in this ancient and holy city. *Some of these cloth-dealers have given evidence for the prosecution in this case. I have no grievance against them. I shall suffer most gladly any imprisonment that may be awarded me if I know that thereby I have touched their hearts and won them over to the great cause.* And I would appeal to the public of this city and province and earnestly request them to do this much for their country—wear *khaddar* and ply the *charkha.*

My co-accused and I are charged with intimidation and extortion. I should like the police and Government officials to examine their own conscience, to search deep down into their hearts and say what many of them have done during the past year and a half. Intimidation and terrorism, bribery and extortion, have been going on over the length and breadth of the province. And the persons guilty of them have not been

Congressmen or our volunteers but the underlings of the Government who have indulged in them frequently with the knowledge and approval of their superiors. Yet they are not tried or punished. They are patted on the back and praised and promoted.

My colleagues and I have seen and personally investigated acts of terrorism and inhumanity. We have seen how men and women have been subjected to the uttermost humiliation. We have seen how terror reigns in Sitapur. We have investigated the brutalities of Shohratganj and we know hundreds of Ballia's gallant workers have been sent to jail for the sole offence of being Congress office-bearers or other principal workers of the Congress. And the poor down-trodden *kisans* with the haunted hopeless look in their eyes, working away like the beasts of the field from morning to nightfall, so that others may enjoy the fruits of their labour. We have seen them harassed and made utterly miserable. Their life became almost too heavy to be borne I need not refer to individual districts. Almost every one of them has the same sad and splendid tale to tell.

Intimidation and terrorism have become the chief instruments of the Government. By these methods they seek to keep down people and to suppress their disaffection. Do they imagine that they will thus instil affection for themselves in the people or make them loyal instruments of their imperialism?

**Affection and loyalty are of the heart. They cannot be purchased in the market-place, much less can they be extorted at the point of the bayonet.** Loyalty is a fine thing. But in India some words have lost their meaning and loyalty has come to be almost a synonym for treason to the motherland and a loyalist is he who is not loyal to his God or his country but merely hangs on to the coat-tail of his alien master. To-day, however, we have rescued the world from the depths and in almost every jail in India will be found true loyalists who have put their cause, their faith and their country above everything else and have been true to them despite all consequences. To them has come the call ; they have seen the vision of freedom and they will not rest or turn away till they have achieved their heart's desire. England is a mighty country with her armies and her navies, but to-day she is confronted with something that is mightier. Her armies and her navies have to face the suffering and the self-sacrifice of a nation determined to be free and no man can doubt what

the issue of such a struggle must be. *We are fighting for our freedom, for the freedom of our country and faith. We desire to injure no nation or people. We wish to have no dominion over others. But we must be perfectly free in our own country.* England has cruelly wronged us during the past 150 years or more. And even yet she has not repented and mended her ways. India gave her a chance a year and a half ago, but in the pride and arrogance of her physical might she has not taken it. The people of India have tried her and they have passed judgment, and from that decree there is no turning back. India will be free of that, there is no doubt, but if England seeks the friendship of a free India, she must repent and purge herself of her many sins, so that she may be worthy of a place in the coming order of things.

**I shall go to jail again most willingly and joyfully. Jail has, indeed, become a heaven for us, a holy place of pilgrimage since our saintly and beloved leader was sentenced.** Big-bodied, great-hearted Shaukat Ali, bravest of the brave and his gallant brother are there and so are thousands of our co-workers. One feels almost lonely outside the jail, and selfishness prompts a quick return. Perhaps I shall be awarded a long term of imprisonment this time. Whether this is so or not, I shall go with the conviction that I shall come out to greet *Swaraj* in India.

I have said many hard things about the British Government. For one thing, however, I must offer it my grateful thanks. It has given us a chance of fighting in this most glorious of struggles. Surely few peoples have had such an opportunity given them. And the greater our suffering, the more difficult the tests we have to pass, the more splendid will be the future of India. India has not survived through thousands of years to go down now. India has not sent her noblest and best twenty-five thousands of her sons, to the jail to give up the struggle. India's future is assured. Some of us, men and women of little faith, doubt and hesitate occasionally, but those who have vision can almost see the glory that will be India's.

**I marvel at my good fortune. To serve India in the battle of freedom is honour enough. To serve her under a leader like Mahatma Gandhi is doubly fortunate. But to suffer for the dear country! What greater good fortune could befall an Indian, unless it is death for the cause or the full realisation of our glorious dream?**

# CHAPTER IV

## India's Weapon Of War

**[India has chosen non-violence as its weapon of war in the holiest of the holy struggle for independence and there is no question of replacing non-violence by violence, says Nehru, because the latter weapon has been weighed in the balance by the nations of the world and found wanting. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru embraced non-violence as his lode-star of life immediately after its trial in India, as is clear from the following resume of Jawaharlal's presidential address, delivered at the U.P. Provincial Conference held at Benares on October 13, 1923. Jawaharlal is the first and foremost exponent of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence, and I wonder if the General himself has not borrowed some ideas of his lieutenant ! It appears there has been some lease-land transaction between Gandhi and Nehru !]**

Our trial was going on in Nabha and for many days we had been cut off from the outside world. A friend happened to gain admittance to the court room and he whispered to me that I had been elected president of this conference. Being very human I felt elated at this signal mark of confidence and honour. But immediately I thought of the long line of presidents full of wisdom and courage, who had preceded me and of the great responsibility of this office and I shuddered at the prospect. And then being human, I felt pleased at being in jail and so escaping the burden of this responsibility. But the Nabha administration willed otherwise. And the few days that elapsed since my discharge under a suspended sentence, have been, I am ashamed to confess, days of illness for me. To-day

I stand before you an object of pity and indulgence.

It is customary on these occasions to present a carefully thought out and previously-prepared address, which is usually printed and distributed. I have not had the opportunity to do so and even if I had the time, I doubt if I could had produced anything worthy of record. You have chosen to cast this burden on me at a strange and critical period in our national history, when parties fight with each other and the foundation of our great movement for freedom, as we have known it in the last three years or more, has been shaken, when senseless and criminal bigotry struts about in the name of religions and instils hatred and violence into the people. The best and wisest of guidance is necessary for us; how can I presume to show the way ?

Less than a month ago, the Congress met in a special session at Delhi and arrived at some momentous dicisions. As a subordinate organisation, we cannot go counter to those decisions. We must accept them and work them to the best of our ability. But I would have you consider where those decisions lead us. Let us be quite clear in our minds about our goal and the manner of reaching it. There was no doubt in us three years ago. *In 1920 and 1921 we were full of faith and confidence. We did not sit down to debate and argue. We knew we were right and we marched on from victory to victory. We felt the truth in us and every fibre of being thrilled at that idea of our fighting for right and fighting in a manner unique and glorious. Those were brave days, the memory of which will endure and be cherished possessions for all of us.* Then our leader left us and weak and unstable and inconstant, we began to doubt and despair. The faith to the old went and with it much of our confidence. There followed a year of strife and dispute and mutual recrimination, and all our energy was diverted to combating and checkmating our erstwhile comrades in the rival camp, Pro-changer and No-changer. No-changer was not behind the Pro-changer in forgetting the basic lesson of non-violence and charity and in imputing the basis of motives to persons of a different way of thinking. We failed to keep even our tempers, how then could we exercise right judgment ? And so gradually Non-violent Non-cooperation began to lose some of its fundamental features and for many became an empty husk devoid of a real significance.

The Delhi Congress, it is said, has brought out a compromise between the two rival schools of thought and

put an end to this long agony. If the Congress results in ending bitterness and suspicion and re-introducing in our politics charity of judgment and non-violence in our thought, then indeed it has largely succeeded. But I do not think that it is correct to describe the principle resolution of the Congress as a compromise resolution. They were only so in so far as certain groups acquiesced in them. I do not think there can be any real or stable compromise between the two principal viewpoints which have been fighting for mastery in the country. They are fundamentally different. They are both honourable methods and their advocates are brave men and keen thinkers but nonetheless they differ radically.

The Delhi Congress, it has been remarked, marks the end of Non-co-operation. I wonder at any one who had lived through the last three or four years in India making this assertion. It passes my comprehension, how even a resolution of the Congress can put an end to a mighty movement. **If India has at all imbibed the teaching of Mahatma Gandhi, if even a group of men remain true to that gospel, then non-co-operation cannot die. And if all of us are utterly unworthy of this teaching and incapable of acting in accordance with it, even then a subsequent generation will wield the mighty weapon and prove to the world that this is the only and the best way which ensures true freedom and ends strife. Non-violent Non-co-operation cannot die. It has gone beyond the boundaries of our country and is the property of the world.**

I shall not presume to criticise the Delhi Congress, but I do think that several of its decisions were opposed to the movement as started by Mahatma Gandhi ; they were contrary to the basic principles, as stated by Mahatmaji, or non-violent non-co-operation. That, of course, is no reason why we should not change our programme, if we are otherwise convinced that a change is necessary. But even from the point of view of the original programme, I welcome the Delhi decisions. They do mean a going back, and it is always difficult and plainful to do so when one believes firmly in the old method. But I believe that this going back or rather this permission to others to go back was necessary at this stage. It may have been possible for those who believed in this to get a verdict from the Congress against any change. But I doubt if this would have done much good to non-co-operation. I am not in the least afraid of the difference

o opinion amongst ourselves. That must continue. But I confess to have experienced a feeling of humiliation, when I saw that our noble movement, nurturned on high ideals and voluntary suffering, was being converted into two party causes, each devoting its money and energy to raising delegates who would lift up their hands at the bidding of their leaders. **Non-co-operation will prosper not by resorting to such western political methods and manoeuvres, but by its utter purity and straightness and by its appeal to the masses.** I almost wish that the Calcutta Special Congress in 1920 had not accepted the non-co-operation policy and programme. This acceptance overwhelmed us from the very beginning and the weight of members paralysed us. We could then have marched in a compact body, strong in our faith and in our discipline and at the right moment have converted the masses and the Congress to our viewpoint. The process was reversed and we have suffered accordingly. The basis of non-co-operation is direct action and this involves continuous suffering. No one can expect large masses of people. Only the elect can do that and the masses can sympathise with them occasionally for a short while. If the Congress really represents the people, it is natural that it should attempt to go back a little to some kind of constitutional action whenever large numbers of people are tried of direct action. To the eager, ever ready for the fray, this is painful. But there is no room for despondency. Only a heavier burden is cast on those who have to keep the method of direct action always before the people ; they have to fight on while the main army will not fail them. And so I am content with the Delhi decision. Any attempt to force the issue would have had unhappy results.

What then is our aim and what should be our means ? Our creed is short and simple, but it shelters many interpretations. We have made it abundantly clear that we have not the slightest interest in provincial autonomy or the transfer of subjects in the Government of India. Full internal freedom means that we must control the finances and the army and the police. So long as we do not control these, we have no freedom in India. This is the minimum. But the question has arisen whether we should not define Swaraj in our creed as independence. Personally I shall welcome the day when the Congress declares for independence. I am convinced that the only proper and right goal for India is independence.

I am not desirous of changing the Congress creed at this

stage. This would give rise to unnecessary debate and controversy and might narrow the Congress and exclude some people. Let us keep the Congress open for all. When the people have thoroughly grasped and approved of the idea, the change in the creed will automatically follow. Till then it is not desirable to force a change.

*I have already indicated that I believe in the Non-co-operation Movement as inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. I believe that the salvation of India and, indeed, of the world will come through non-violent non-co-operation. Violence has had a long career in the world. It has been weighed repeatedly and found wanting. The present condition of Europe is eloquent testimony of the inefficiency of violence to settle anything. I believe that violence in Europe will go from excess to excess and will perish in the flames it has itself kindled and be reduced to ashes. Many people smile and fling cheap sneers at the prospect of non-violence ever coming into its own and directing the affairs of men and nations. They point to the frailty of human nature and the universal prevalence of anger and hatred and violence. I am afraid few of us are free from these. I know to my sorrow that I am full of violent thoughts and can with difficulty drag myself back to this straight and narrow path. But those who mock and smile would do well if they realised the power of the ideas and if they studied the progress of this particular idea. For it has already caught the imagination of the thinkers of the world and the Indian masses have been wonderfully affected by it.*

Non-co-operation and Non-violence, these are the two essential ingredients of this movement. The idea of non-co-operation is simple enough clear to the meanest intellect, but nonetheless few of us had realised it, excepting partly during the Bengal partition days, till Mahatmaji issued his call to action. Evil flourishes only because we tolerate and assist it, the most despotic and tyrannical government can only carry on because the people it governs themselves submit to it. England holds India in bondage because Indians co-operate with the Englishmen and thereby strengthen British rule. Withdraw the co-operation and the fabric of foreign rule collapses. That follows automatically and requires no proof.

But in spite of the logic and of the inevitability of the result, many of us cannot adopt this obvious method. The subtle position of the British rule has enervated us and emasculated us and made cowards of us all. We have lost the spirit of adventures and we cannot take a risk even though the prize be so splendid as the freedom of India. The idea

of non-co-operation has taken root and has sunk down to the masses, but sustained courage is lacking to give outward expression to this idea. With many it is an economic question. But what shall we say of those who even without this incentive give their time, energy and money to organise the innumerable functions for the honour and glory of English officials? To such a depth we have sunk that men of intelligence and education among us think it no shame to help in their own dishonour. I make no complaint of the English officials. They are brave men serving their country to the best of their ability. I wish our men were equally brave and would think as often of the honour and dignity of their own country.

*I firmly believe in the efficiency of Non-violence. But non-violence has nothing to do with cowardice or weakness. Mahatmaji repeatedly stated that even violence is preferable to cowardice. Fear and cowardice are the greatest sins and unhappily we have enough of them in our country. Our anger and hatred are really the outcome of our fear and impotence. If we could get rid of this fear and cowardice, there would be little hatred left or any other obstacle to our onward march. Let us, therefore, root out this cowardice and give it no shelter.* Above all let it not masquerade, as it unfortunately often does as non-violence. "A world of evil" says a great Frenchman "is preferable to emasculated good." There is too much sappiness and softness in us, too much emasculated good. One is almost driven to the conclusion that we are nianely and passively good, if good that is, because this is the path of least resistance and because we have not the courage to be evil. We dare not sin, though we think of it often enough and would like to do so.

This is a hateful condition. It is dishonest, neuter and hypocritical. Better the honest man of evil who sins consciously and knowingly and with the strength that is in him. When he reforms, he will be a tower of strength to the cause of good, because his foundations are strong. But the inanely and hypocritically good can be of use to no cause. There is no strength in them, their foundations are laid up on the shifting sands. And so there is no place for the cowardly in the non-violent movement.

I am laying stress on this question of non-violence for it is well that we should be clear about it. After some years of suspension there has apparently been a recrudescence of the violent revolutionary movement in Bengal. I can appreciate the impatience and longing for freedom which impels many a

young man to violent action. I can admire the reckless courage which does not count the cost. But I cannot understand how any one imagines that sporadic violence can bring freedom nearer to us. Freedom is our right and according to old customs and ordinary law of nations, we are entitled even to resort to violence to achieve it. But even freedom would be a doubtful and a tainted thing if we have to resort to foul means to gain it. I pray that this fate may never overtake our great movement. Violence may be justified under certain circumstances, but it must be open and above board and straight-forward. But no circumstance will justify secret killing, the dagger of the assassin and the stab in the dark. No nation has yet profited by these methods. They but sully a great cause and alienate world sympathy. On no account, therefore, can we take to the bomb and the dagger. And those who unthinkingly adopt these methods injure the cause they have at heart. We cannot even think of open and organised violence. We have really little choice left in the matter and even if we did not and on other grounds preferred, it would be driven to non-violent non-co-operation. Bolshevism and Fascism are the waves of the West to-day. They are really alike and represent different phases of insensate violence and intolerance. The choice for us is between Lenin and Mussolini on the one side and Gandhi on the other. Can there be doubt as to who represents the soul of India to-day.

India made her choice more than three years ago. She chose the path of non-violence and suffering, of direct action and peaceful revolution. From that there is no going back. There may occasionally appear to be some slackness or some change. We may have our bad patches and our moments of despondency, but the vision once seen cannot be forgotten and the glory of suffering for a great cause cannot be given up. Again and again the chance will come to us and while the wise argue, the brave will go forth heeding not the consequences, full of joy at the thought that they have been privileged to serve the great cause. Learned disputations take place frequently in the country for the preparation of civil disobedience. Much can be done in disciplining the people and creating a favourable atmosphere. But courage and will to suffer cannot be instilled into the people by lectures or tours. Personal examples alone can do it and it may be that little incident may electrify the whole of India and make us launch a mighty compaign of civil disobedience. Till that time comes

we may have many opportunities given us of testing our mettle and hardening our fibre. Let us take advantage of them and keep the practice and ideal of direct action and peaceful revolution ever before the people. We need not worry about the opportunities and chances. They will surely come to us. Let us see to it that they find us ready when they do come.

But our suffering would serve little purpose if we cannot deal sanely with our communal questions and exercise the spirit of strife and bigotry. A few broken heads matter little, but the reason for this does matter. *It is most strange that for the most trivial things, for childish superstitions or silly prejudices, people take risk and lose their reason in the sea of anger. The vital things, the real things that matter, pass unnoticed. Ignorance and bigotry put an end to all rational thoughts. It is almost useless to argue or convince. Religion is regarded and in its name are done the most shameful things. Indeed religion has become the excuse for many sins.* It has little sanctity left and it is trotted out in season and out of season and all agreement naturally ends. We seem to have drifted back to a state of affairs which prevailed in Europe during the dark ages, when to think rationally was considered an evil. I think it is time for persons, who regard religion as something good and sacred, and the exercise of rational thought as essential for human progress, to protest with all their might against all kinds of bigotry and superstition.

A great deal is being said in the press and from the platform about the protection of communal interests. It is reported that associations for the purpose are being formed. So far as I can gather, all this sound and fury has little to do with action. We have little courage left for effective action. Our helplessness enrages us and so we camouflage our fear with brave words and not daring to stand up to our real opponent, we attack our brothers and neighbours. That has ever been the way of slaves. The Delhi Congress has done much to bring peace. Let us endeavour to put an end to all activities which are directed against another community and concentrate on the main issue. We have no time for mutual skirmishes.

I wish to say little about the certification of the Salt tax and the Kenya decision. Enough has been said about them already. They but strengthen our contention that freedom is the only remedy and non-co-operation is the only means. Even Mr. Shastri with his abundant faith in the imperial idea has reconsidered his position and suggested methods clearly akin to non-co-operation. Even so will wisdom dawn on

others. Nor do I wish to say mueh about Nagpur or the brave fight that was put up there. Our province took a worthy part in it and No-changer and Pro-changer joined hands to vindicate the honour of the national flag. To-day all eyes are turned to the North where the gallant Akalies are challenging the might of the Government. They have taken up the proud position of the vanguard in our army of freedom and they are fully worthy of it. I am sure your hearts go out to them in full sympathy and admiration and when the time comes, as come it will, we will not be lacking in our support to them.

I have already finished. I would but remind you that no fight can go on without continuous preparation behind the lines. That is dull work, but it is essential work. The real test of our perseverance and ability is the succes we achieve in the constructive programme. We should therefore strengthen our Congress Committees and above all take the message of *khaddar* to every home. That was the last word of Mahatma when he went to Jail. We shall forget it at our peril. The Delhi Congress has suggested various kinds of activities. Every one us, whatever his views may be, can find something to suit him. No one offers an excuse for shirking work.

Before I end I would mention a predecessor of mine in this office, one whose life is one long record of suffering cheerfully, borne for the sake of the country. Maulana Hasrat Mohani offered battle to the British Government and went to jail long before non-co-operation had made jail-going an easy matter, the bravest and staunchest of the soldiers of freedem whom nothing could divert or turn away, who would not even give in to his comrades much less to the alien Government. Whilst in jail serving out a long sentence, he has been awarded another sentence of 2½ years for jail offence. The Government perhaps think that they can break his spirit and frighten him by this shocking and vindictive sentence. They little know him. I am sure your deep sympathy and greetings will go out to this bright jewel of our province.

I have had my say. I wish to assure you in all honesty and I am full of hope. I have little patience with the pessimists and crookers. I am convinced that political freedom will come to us before long, if not entirely through our strength, then through the weakness of Europe and England, For Europe is in the melting pot and England with all her

seeming might cannot but be affected by the collapse of the continent. Wars and rumours of the wars follow each other in quick succession. They will continue till the lesson of non-violenee is learnt by bitter experience. So political freedom for India is certain. But I sometimes fear that when it comes to us it may find us lacking in true strength and the greater qualities. And instead of leaving a shining example to the rest of the world, India may become a cheap and inefficient replica of the countries of the West. Let us take thc longer view from now and try to avoid this and build up a great and strong India worthy of the great leader whom God has blessed us with.

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## CHAPTER V

# Message to Europe

**[Jawaharlal Nehru conveyed a powerful message to the peoples of Europe about conditions in India at the *International Congress Against Imperialism*. The following speech was delivered by him at Brussels (Belgium) on February 10, 1927. In the fewest possible words Pandit Nehru has summed up the historical background, the current political affairs of India and the titanic struggle of Nationalism against Imperialism.]**

## INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AGAINST IMPERIALISM.

With the greatest pleasure I bring the warm and hearty greetings of the Indian National Congress which has commissioned me to link our national movement with this international united effort to fight imperialism. We in India have experienced the full strength of imperialism. We know accurately what it means and we are naturally interested in every movement which is directed against imperialism. In fact if you want a typical example that will help you to understand the nature and consequence of imperialism, I think you will find nothing better than India. From the internal condition of India, as our President has said, it may be understood in what manner the English imperialism represses and exploits workers. In India you will find a wonderful instance of every phase of imperialism that you may wish to study. Whether you come from China, Egypt or other distant lands, your interests are bound up with ours. And the Indian problem, too, is of interest and importance for you.

I cannot tell you here the whole history of Indian exploitation—how India is maltreated, repressed and plundered. It is a long and very sad story. And all that I can do is to bring to your notice one or two of the most important

factors which we have to consider particulary in this International Congress. You have heard of various disturbances, massacres and random butcheries and most of you have heard of the Amritsar incidents. Do not believe that because this affair has given rise to greater uproar than many others, it is in any way the singular and the worst episode in the history of India since the Britishers came to us. They came to us, as you doubtless know, by putting one province against another until they finally established themselves firmly. During the whole period of their stay they have followed the old policy of "Divide and Rule." I regret to have to say that they still follow this policy. The early history of their occupation is one of the wildest and the most shameless example we have ever seen in the history of the world. Even the British historians, who are certainly not impartial, admit that the early history of India under British rule represents an epoch of predatory war—a period in which freebooters prowled about and committed plunders and robberies in the land in an unbridled manner. *You know perhaps also of the event which is known as the Sepoy Mutiny and which took place 70 years ago. It is called so, but if fate had willed otherwise and the so-called rebels had been crowned with success, then to-day it would have been called the Indian War of Independence.* What we have to say in all this, is that Amritsar was absolutely nothing in comparison with what took place during the Sepoy Mutiny. But since then such things have been constantly taking place, even to-day random firing is not infrequent. Numberless comrades and friends of ours are detained in prison without any accusation and without any trial. Many of our best comrades in India have made jail their real home, or they are in exile and cannot come back to their fatherland.

This gives rise to a little sensation but the real injury by the Britishers in India, the real exploitation, is much more severe than the shootings and hangings, which occasionally give rise to some disturbance and the systematic method in which workers, labourers and farmers are being exploited had made India what it is to-day. **We read in history, not only of the ancient times, but also of the modern period, of the riches of India. India has allured by her riches the most dfferent people from the different extremities of the world, but now if one goes to India, the most horrible poverty stares him in the face.** There he finds most of the population do not know where they will get their next meal and frequently they do not get it at all. Everywhere one

meets these hungry people or these half-fed people. This is the India of to-day. No statistics, facts or numbers are wanted to convince you of this, that India has suffered terrible economic decline and that if definite steps are not taken to prevent this process India, will altogether cease to exist as a nation. You know perhaps how a few years ago (immediately after their advent) the Britishers applied the most ruthless methods to render their industries profitable for themselves. In those days, the new doctrine of guardianship over the Indian people was not mentioned, our repression was not less severe but it wss frank, we had a ruthless and open exploitation and oppression of all Indian industries. It was bad enough, but worse followed gradually inasmuch as our ancient system of education was destroyed and we were disarmed. In multifarious ways the spirit of Indian people was destroyed and it was attempted to take away from them every capacity for active and constructive work. The conscious policy of Britishers in India was to attempt to divide us. After they have disarmed us, now they say we are not fit to protect our country ; after extinguishing our system of education, they have set in its place something which is ridiculously meagre and which teaches us false history and tries to educate us in the hatred of our own country and in the glorification of England. After all these, they tell us now that we have not sufficient culture to be a free nation.

*It is now being advertised in the English press that the Indians fight among themselves. It would also be noted in this connection that it is extremely exaggerated. It is also the policy of the British to bring about these disturbances and to sharpen them where they are in existence and to do everything to keep them alive.* This is the policy of Britain, however much she may now deny it. Now, what is the condition of India to-day ? We are speaking of exploitation. We experience it very fully. Not a single exploitation but often a double and treble exploitation. We have a part of India—the so-called Indian States—where under the proteetion of Britain the feudal system obtains. Often the English point them out to us and other countries as well, and say, "Look at these parts of India where a kind of self-government is in existence. Other parts of India are much more advanced." But the British forget to tell one thing. They forget to tell us that these States are under their care and they themselves have hindered progress in them. It is the British who first enslaved them and do not allow them now to develop.

Consider the case of great landowners. You have here again the land tenure system which in a great part of India is a feudal system and has been brought to us and kept up by the British. It is altogether difficult to change it so long as the British Government is not willing to do it. In the policy of British Government in India we must reckon even the Indian Princes and great landowners as their confederates, because a free India would lead to the liberation of the farmer's exploitation. Then again we often see a harmful agreement between the British capitalists and Indian capitalists.

A study of past history and accounts of the last few years will prove that the British world politics is in a great measure influenced by their Indian possession. Who can be deceived for a moment as to what will happen to Great Britain if she does not possess India? There would then be no British World Empire. What will take place in future when India is once free? I cannot say but it is certain that the British World Empire will cease to exist.

From their capitalistic and imperialistic point of view, the British try to do everything in their power to retain their possession of India. The whole foreign policy is to a great extent influenced by this aim, therefore, they must build up a firm overlordship in India. The result is that India has suffered and still suffers. But that is not all. On account of India other lands have suffered and suffer still. You have heard of the last instance of the activities of British Imperialism in India—the sending of Indian troops to China. They were sent in spite of the sharpest opposition offered by the Indian National Congress. I must remind you of the fact—even to my shame I must mention—that Indian troops were often used to repress other people. I read to you the names of the number of countries in which Indian troops have been sent by the English for their purpose. In the year 1840 they went to China for the first time and in the year 1927 they are still going there and during this time they have been used there times without number. They were in Egypt, in Abyssinia, in the Persian Gulf, in Mesopotamia, Arabia, Syria, Tibet, Afghanistan and Burma. It is a horrifying list.

*I would like to understand that the Indian problem is not only a national problem, but it directly affects a great number of other countries, and it is of world-wide interest because it directly applies to the greatest and the most influential imperialism of our time.* It is clear that such a state of things is insupportable for India. We

cannot tolerate it any longer, not only because freedom is good and slavery is bad but, because it is a question of life and death for us and our country. You, too, who have come here from the different countries of the world, cannot tolerate these dreadful chains which are also a great hinderance to your own freedom. For us in India, freedom is a pressing necessity. But it is not less important for you if we wish our freedom. The noble example of Chinese Nationalists has filled us with hope and, as soon as possible, we wish to follow in their footsteps. We want the fullest freedom for our country, naturally of course not only of the internal control but freedom also of making connections with our neighbours and other lands as we wish. Because we believe that this, our International Congress, affords a possibility of combined work, we welcome it and greet it.

## CHAPTER VI

# Visions of War

**[Who was responsible for war ? Britain or Germany ? Jawaharlal saw with a prophetic vision that war was coming four years before Hitler came to power and twelve years before the war started. This speech is a remarkable treatise in apportioning responsibility for the Second World War. Jawaharlal's study of the European situation is simply unchallengeable. This is the full text of the speeches delivered at the Indian National Congress held at Madras in December 1927 in moving two resolutions on War Danger and Independence. Jawaharlal describes vividly the "secret" preparations of war made by Great Britain in the twenties which fathered Hitler and mothered the monster of the Second World War].**

"This Congress has noted with grave concern the extraordinary and extensive war preparations which the British Government is carrying on in India and in the Eastern Seas, especially in the North-West Frontier of India. *These preparations for war are not only calculated to strengthen the hold of British Imperialism in India in order to strangle all attempts at freedom, but must result in hastening a disastrous war in which an attempt will be made to make India again a tool in the hands of foreign imperialists.*

" The Congress declares that the people of India have no quarrel with their neighbours and desire to live at peace with them, and assets their right to determine whether or not they will take part in any war.

" The Congress demands that these war preparations be put an end to, and further declares that in the event of

the British Government embarking on any warlike adventure and endevouring to exploit India in it for the furtherance of their imperialist aims, it will be the duty of the people of India to refuse to take any part in such a war or to co-operate with them in any way whatsoever." Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in commending the resolution for the acceptance of the Congress said :—

Mr. President and comrades,—This session of the Indian National Congress will have many important resolutions to consider and adopt. But I venture to say that not one of them will be more important than the one I have just now placed before you. *It is important because any war nowadays is an international disaster. It must result in terrible slaughter and destruction. It must let loose as the last war let loose, the flood-gates of hatred and barbarism.* When all countries and all nations are linked together and cannot be separately considered, it is inconceivable even if a war is fought outside the frontiers of India, that it would leave India untouched. We have intimate connection with any such war, because it is likely to be fought very near our frontiers and India is very likely to be involved in it. If there is such a war, you and I will not sit peaceably holding our conferences and congresses. Indeed, we may ourselves hear the roaring of cannons, we may see bombshells dropping from aeroplanes upon our peaceful villages. It is very important also because such a war result—I hope it does not result—in strengthening British imperialism to such an extent that it may make it more difficult for us to achieve freedom. It may remove for a generation or two our hope of freedom, so that in any event we cannot ignore any preparations for war or any chance of war.

No man or woman can ignore it, least of all an Indian who desires to achieve freedom for his country. *It is a well-known fact that all countries are preparing more or less for war. It is not England only ; it is every country because in Europe to-day there is fear. Europe is in the grip of fear and out of fear comes hatred and out of that comes violence and barbarism. Every country in Europe hates every other country. The most feared and hated country in Europe is England.* There is talk of disarmament, there is talk of peace. But those of you who have taken the trouble to study what has been happening at Geneva and elsewhere will realize that all this talk of disarmament is mere camouflage. To-day Europe is perhaps a greater power magazine than it was in 1914 when the last great

war broke out. War has not broken out yet because all nations are exhausted. But all the seeds of war are present and at present in greater number than they were thirteen years ago. When you look at the Balkans, Poland, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Lithunia and Russia, everywhere there is preparation for war, and there is chance for war. Let us see what attitude, with which we have most relation, has been taken in these war preparations and in this talk of peace and disarmament. We are specially interested in Britain's attitude. We have had in recent times various disarmament conferences at Geneva. There was a Naval Disarmament Conference also. But these conferences failed largely because Britain could not agree to proposals made by other countries. Indeed, in the past, Britain has definitely refused to accept the principle of compulsory arbitration with a little country like Switzerland because it may be given up as a dangerous principle ! It has stood its right to wage war without any reference to the League of Nations or to any other authority. At the last meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations, Sir Austin Chamberlain made an extraordinary speech on behalf of England. He stated that he was not prepared to sacrifice the Empire for the vague ideals of peace and disarmament of the League of Nations. For him the British Commonwealth was a greater thing than those ideals.

What is the Empire but India ? It comes to this. For the sake of India, to hold India under subjection, Sir Austin Chamberlain and the British Government cannot agree to the principle of disarmament or peace. *It is well recognised in Europe specially by small nations who are always raising this question in the League of Nations that England is the greatest obstacle in the attainment of disarmament or world peace.* I should like to indicate you some of the war preparations which England is making. You know that preparations for war are secret preparations. Nations do not advertise when they are going to prepare for war. Nonetheless when preparations are being carried on a most extensive scale—on the scale which England has been carrying on—it is impossible to hide them. So some of these things have come to light. The biggest and one of the latest things we have had for a number of years before us is the Singapore base. Why is England spending millions and millions of pounds and making the great naval base of Singapore ? Surely it can only be a challenge directed against China and Japan and also against France, or if there is a war, there is a

danger of France declaring war against England. Then England can threaten French possession in Indo-China from Singapore. It is also directed against the Dutch East Indies, because England can force Holland to be neutral in case of war. It is directed partly at any rate against America and American dominations in the Pacific, because in case of a conflict England could sweep down the Phillippine Islands and take possession of them. It is chiefly directed against India because it is for the retention of India that all these things are done. Imagine that there is a struggle in India, then the Singapore base will facilitate the transport of troops from Australia to India and in many other ways will help the British in taking the offensive in India. So much for the Singapore base.

" Then we have another naval base which is being made at Trincomalee. We have also the Great Royal Indian Navy which has recently been created with a flourish of trumpets. Whatever it may be, it is not an Indian Navy except perhaps that the expenses for it will come out of the Indian Exchequer. This Navy is merely an adjunct of the British Navy to help the British Government against India although it may be at our cost. Again, I should like to draw your attention to the rapid developement of the transport system in India specially in the North-West Frontier Province, Western Punjab and the north-east frontier in India. **War now a days very largely depends on transport. That is why the transport system has been perfected. Strategic railways have been laid all over the Nort-Western Frontier. You have heard of the Khyber Pass Railway.** You will also hear subsequently of other strategic railways which are being built at great cost for military reasons. When military reasons are considered, cost is no consideration. Military roads have been built from the Khyber Pass, from the Punjab, from the North-Western Frontier, right up to Karachi. Motor-lorry service has been started from Karachi to Peshawar. All this will faciliate the transport of troops and other materials in time of war. Although railways are there, railways might perhaps not be suitable—they may perhaps have strikes to contend against ; therefore the whole military machinery of England is being made self-sufficient.

Now let me come to the north-eastern frontier in Assam. Recently you might have noticed in the papers that proposals are being considered that a part of Assam to the north-east of India may be converted into a new military province like the

North-Western Frontier to facilitate the carrying on of war there, if necessary. For this purpose roads are laid, railways are projected between India and Burma and even between Burma and Assam. You may remember that the *Forward* of Calcutta was some time ago banned from entering Burma. The reason why it was banned was that it published and criticised something about these military roads in Assam, and the proposal to create a new military province. Let me go back to the North-Western Province where there is an extraordinary concentration of air forces and tanks. Those who know have told us, it is the finest and best equipment that any army possesses Karachi has been created an air base and other bases in the North-Western Province are being prepared so that the province is to-day full of activity for preparations for war. Two proposals have been made in England and also in Anglo-Indian journals in India which, although officials denied in Parliament, persist in getting publicity in the press. These periodicals are supposed to know what Government are doing and these proposals are of the greatest interest to us. The first was that a part of the British Expeditionary Force should be stationed in India because there is more danger of war in Asia than in Europe. Therefore it is desirable that that force should be ready in India and should immediately start war-like preparations when necessary. The second proposal was that these highly developed mechanised forces should be used when there is any danger of war. The procedure that England should adopt was coldly stated in the English press to be not to wait for an attack but to make a forward spring into Central Asia across Afghanistan in one sweep. This was proposed because just in the same way Germans are supposed in their attack on France to have made a forward spring across Belgium.

*I should like to tell you one or two things also in connection with the war preparations of Britain, which a friend of mine has drawn attention to. He himself is a famous doctor and tells me that a large number of persons have received a circular letter from the Medical Military Department of India. This letter has been issued to every member of the Civil-Military Department and he has been asked if he is prepared in case of emergency to serve as Medical Military Officer.* Another letter has been issued to all doctors who have served in the last war asking them if they are prepared to join the Medical Reserve. Friends, I should like you to consider what all this means. When the resolution was moved in the Subjects Committee, some people thought that it was rather an

unnecessary resolution. They have not heard of any military preparations and they do not know anything of the coming war. They think that our domestic problems are more important. They ask why we should waste time and energy over what might be happening in the North-West Frontier Province. I beg of you to consider whether these few facts are not sufficient to make you realise the great danger of war that exists in the world and round about us in particular. If such a danger exists, are you prepared to take no notice of it, but discuss only petty problems ?

Two more things I want to tell you in connection with these preparations. The recent treaty between England and Mesopotamia. The Anglo-Iraq treaty—is one. And the second is the Amir's visit to India. I would not be surprised if the cordial welcome the British Government extended to him, has not something to do with the desire of the British Government to win him over. We are not in a position to stop the war, it may be. But at any rate we are in a position to make it clear what attitude India will take up and it is quite possible and conceivable that if India's attitude is clearly stated then England too may change hers. **England might not dare to provoke war when she knows that India would not support the war but actually hinder the conduct of the war.** Now this resolution lays down clearly that India has no quarrel with her neigbours. As to the declaration itself, it is our right to determine whether we shall join the war or not. Thirdly, another declaration follows and that is the most important. In case war comes and an attempt is made to exploit you, you will refuse to be exploited and to take any part in the war. I trust that if war comes and I think war may be nearer than most of us imagine—it may come in a year, two years or five years—the National Congress will follow up the lead given to-day. I also trust that the Indian people will rally round the Congress forgetting their petty differences and generally adopt the attitude which the Congress has suggested and refuse to participate in the war and suffer any consequence that might follow. I am convinced that if the Congress and the Indian people adopt this attitude they will emerge from that great ordeal much better, much freer and India will be an united and independent nation. (Applause.)

## INDEPENDENCE RESOLUTION.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rising amidst cheers said :—

It is my high privilege to place before you the resolution of Independence. (Cheers).

The resolution reads thus :—

" The Congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be complete national independence."

I do not think I can describe this resolution in any better language than that used by the distinguished ex-President of the Congress, Dr. Annie Besant in an interview which she gave immediately after the Subjects Committee had accepted this resolution. She said that it was a dignified and a clear statement of India's goal (Cheers).

No special remarks are necessary from me in commending this resolution for your acceptance specially after almost complete unanimity with which the Subjects Committee approved of it. But I wish to explain very clearly one or two points connected with this resolution. The first thing is that this resolution although it makes clear the goal does not change the present creed of the Congress. If you pass this resolution, you declare by a majority, I hope by an over-whelming majority, that the Congress is to-day for complete independence. Nonetheless you leave the doors of the Congress open to such persons as may not approve of this goal, as they perhaps are satisfied with a lesser or a smaller goal. I think that although the door of the Congress is open, there should be no doubt, if you approve of this resolution, everybody must say that the majority of the Congressmen to-day demand complete independence for the country. Now this resolution as placed before you is a very short and simple one. In the Subjects Committee the resolution, as you may know because the proceedings are quite public, was slightly longer and more complicated. But ultimately it was changed to this present formula and this formula was adopted.

I wish to make it clear to you that the adoption of this formula does not in any way change the spirit or the meaning of the resolution. It means what it says. It means complete independence. It means control of the defence forces of the country. It means control over the financial and economic policy of the country. It means control over our relations with foreign countries. (Hear, hear). Without these things independence would be a travesty and camouflage.

Thirdly, I wish to point out to you lest there be any

mistake that this goal, which I hope you will adopt to-day, is the immediate goal and not a goal of the far-distant future (Cheers). Whether we achieve it to-day or to-morrow, a year hence, or ten years hence, I cannot say. That depends on your strength and the strength of the country.

May I in conclusion express my heartfelt gratitude that the Congress is about to adopt the goal worthy of our country's high destiny and hope that this goal may be reached in the near future? (Cheers)."

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# CHAPTER VII

# Message to Women

**[This short and sweet message of Jawaharlal to the women of India tells more in a nutshell than other people have written voluminous books to set forth before the public. This precious gem of a speech was delivered by him on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the Mahila Vidyapitha Hall at Allahabad on the 31st of March 1928. It is clear that he wants every Indian girl to be a rebel like himself !]**

Mr. Chancellor, brothers and sisters,

I thank you for the honour you have done me in asking me to lay the foundation-stone of the Vidyapitha. I was rather surprised to receive this invitation and I hesitated to accept it. I have always thought that it was the business of the high officials and revered elders to perform such ceremonies. I belong to neither of these categories. I have also found that on such occasion it is the usual custom to utter pious platitudes which mean little. But you are perhaps aware that being a revel by nature, I am no lover of the platitudes of the bygone age, and it may be that something that I may say to-day will not be pleasing to many of you here. But you have taken the risk in inviting me. I have accepted this invitation partly because I was connected with this institution when I was the Chairman of the Municipal Board. But my chief attraction has been the interest that I took in women's education and women's rights.

**A great French idealist, Charles Fourrier once said : "One could judge the degree of civilization of a country by the social and political position of its women." And if we are to judge of India to-day we shall have to judge of her by**

**her women. The future that we build up will also be judged by the position of Indian women.** I must confess to you that I am intensely dissatisfied with the lot of the Indian women to-day. We hear a good deal about Sita and Savitri. They are revered names in India and rightly so. But I have a feeling that these echoes from the past are raised chiefly to hide our present deficiencies and to prevent us from attacking the root causes of women's degradation in India to-day.

I find frcm a reference to the report of this institution that it was started to give special instruction to women. It was laid down that while man was the bread-winner, woman's place was in the home and her ideal should be that of a devoted wife and nothing more. Her chief delight should be in skilfully rearing her children and serving her revered elders. May I say that I do not agree with this ideal of women's life or education ? What does it signify ? It means that woman has one profession and one only, that is the profession of marriage and it is our chief-business to train her for this profession. Even in this profession her lot is to be one of secondary importance. She is always to be the devoted helpmate, the follower and the obedient slave of her husband and others. I wonder if any of you here has read Ibsen's Doll's House ; if so, you will perhaps appreciate the word "Doll" when I use it in this connection.

*The future of India cannot consist of dolls and playthings and if you made half the population of a country a mere plaything of the other half, an encumbrance on others, how will you ever make progress? Therefore I say that you must face the problem boldly and attack the roots of the evil. We have* purdah *and child-marriage and denial of rights to women in so many fields. Go to any country and you will see bright-faced boys and girls playing and growing strong in mind and body. Here children of the same age are kept in* purdah *locked up in cages almost and deniend in a large measure all freedom. They are married just when they should be growing physically and intellectually and are thus stunted and made miserable for life.*

If this Vidyapitha really stands for the progress of our women, it must attack these evil customs. But I should like to remind the women present here that no people, no group, no community, no country, has ever got rid of its disabilities by the generosity of the oppressor. India will not be free until we are strong enough to force our will on England and the women of India will not attain their full rights by the mere generosity of the men of India. They will have to fight

for them and force their will on the menfolk before they can succeed.

I hope therefore that this Vidyapitha will be instrumental in sending out, into the province and the country, women who are rebels against the unjust and tyrannical social customs of the day and who will fight all who oppose this progress, women who are as much soldiers of the country as the best men. (Cheers.)

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## CHAPTER VIII

# The Boy Comes Home

**[Jawaharlal's visits to Europe are pregnant with fresh political experiences and have a touch of romance about them. The following speech was delivered when he returned home from one of such voyages. It is the substance of the reply to the welcome address presented by the District Board of Allahabad on April 3, 1928. Jawaharlal pathetically states that an Indian who goes out of India is like a soldier who has deserted the field of battle. He has whiled away his time in leisurely repose far from the scenes of conflict. And this is not to be regarded a praiseworthy act !]**

*I did not know that it was a special merit on my part to visit foreign countries, something which deserved the high honour you have done me. For a soldier to desert from the field of battle and while away his time in leisurely repose, far from the scenes of conflict is not usually considered a very praiseworthy act. But you have made even this an occasion for doing me honour. The reason can only be, as you have your self hinted at, your exceeding kindness and your affection which seeks an occasion when there is none.* May I say that nothing could give me greater pleasure than this token of affection from the peasants of the district of Allahabad and their representatives ? I have wandered in many of your villages and have ever met with the warmest welcome, and the poorest out of his poverty has offered hospitality. Political life has many ups and downs, many disappointments, many sinkings of heart, and I have had my share of these, but more than amply have all these been compensated by the love and trust of the peasantry and I look back on my association with them with these feelings of gratitude. I can never forget them or their love and simple faith for one who is not one of them, who belonged to a different class and who lived a life of comfort and ease whilst

they suffered poverty and a lack of all good things of life. They did me the high honour of treating me almost as one of themselves. That honour I shall treasure to the last.

**You have referred to two things which are very dear to me, independence for this country of ours and equality between man and man. You could have chosen nothing else for which I cared as much. I rejoice that you sympathise with these ideals.** Whatever differences there may be among politicians and others, I make bold to say that there is no Indian who does not want to look forward to complete independence for this country. Differences there are about methods. May I remind you that twenty years ago Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who dedicated his life to the service of the motherland and said that he hoped that India would achieve complete independence some day ? The day is twenty years nearer now than it was then, and let us hope that we shall see it soon.

*To-day we see a society in which there are tremendous differences between man and man. Great riches on one side and great poverty on the other. Some people live in luxury without doing any work, whilst others work from morning to night with no rest or leisure and yet have not got the barest necessaries of life. This cannot be right. It is the negation of justice. It is not the fault of our individuals who happen to be rich. It is the fault of the system and it is up to us to change this system which permits of exploitation of man by man and produces so much misery. Our country can produce enough to permit every man and woman living in it to live in comfort and peace. Every man and woman must have the opportunity to develop to the best of his or her ability. But to do so we shall have to forget some of our ideas of a by-gone age. Honour and merit must come from ability and hard work and not because of caste or birth or riches. Let each one of us consider the other as his brothers, not higher or lower, neither to be worshipped nor despised, but treated as equal with equal rights to share this good country of ours and all it produces.*

I have travelled much and I have compared with pain the condition of the peasantry in other countries with our peasants. In other countries, I have found a large measure of comfort and even luxury ; here there is abject poverty, which is made worse by the evil customs which we still adhere to. We must fight and get rid of the causes of this poverty and also discard these customs which keep us from progress. We must learn what is happening in other countries and profit by their example. Our district boards often approach the Government for grants. But have you realised that the whole

machinery of government is run from the rural areas ? All the money spent on the army, on the huge salaries of the Viceroy and Governors and other officials—where does it largely come from except from the poverty-stricken villages of India ? Even our towns live at the expense of our villages. And what do our villages get in return ? There is very little education, very little sanitation or medical facilities, and absolutely no arrangements for proper housing. All your money is taken away and when you beg for doles very little is given to you by way of favour. In other countries it is the bounden and first duty of the State to give free education to every person, free medical facilities and sanitation and to build good houses for the poor. In other countries, it is felt that no nation can be strong unless its men and women are healthy and well-educated. But here it is more important to pay heavy salaries to officials and spend money on the army. No one thinks of the poor, and the country is weak and poor. We must put an end to this if we have to build up a prosperous India full of healthy and educated men and women. The future of India lies with the peasantry.

I thank you again for the honour you have done me and for the good wishes which you have so generously expressed. And I join with you in the fervent hope that our ideals may be speedily realised and India may come into her own again.

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## CHAPTER IX

# The Punjab, India and the World

**[Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru recently declared at the Lahore Station that he loves to rebuke the Punjabis. Why does he love to rebuke us ? His presidential address at the Punjab Provincial Conference held on April 11th, 1928 supplies the answer. The sword arm of India, says Nehru, has allowed itself to be wielded by British Imperialism for oppression of the free peoples in Egypt, China and elsewhere. The speech is a magnificent study of the Punjab in the background of Indian politics and current world affairs.]**

### PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

I am deeply grateful for the honour you have done me. But few of you, I fancy, will envy me my position here to-day. It has become customary at our congresses and conferences to refer to the crisis which continually confronts us and every year we are told that the situation is more critical than before. Too frequent reminders have made the warning lose some of its meaning and the cry of wolf often passes unheeded. But crisis or no crisis, it may be said without exaggeration that we are rapidly approaching the cross-roads of our destiny and whether we will it or not, we shall have to make a vital choice. I do not refer to the seven uninvited gentlemen from England who have recently visited us and threaten to come again despite all protestation. Their comings and goings do not vastly excite me. But greater things are happening than the Simon Commission, vaster changes are afoot. *The world is in a ferment and strange forces are at work. The gods of yesterday are neglected and lie almost forgotten and new ideas and new myths convulse the people. Even from India with its immemorial and crushing weight of tradition and its fear of change, the challenge to the dead past has gone forth and increases in volume.* Brave indeed must be the person who will don the role of prophet and

point out with certainty the path to be pursued by us. I claim no such role and hence my hesitation in accepting the presidentship of this conference.

If the framing of a policy for India as a whole offers difficulties, the Punjab has her own problems which, small in themselves, have gradually overshadowed the longer issue and effectively prevent a solution. This province has earned a most unenviable reputation.

The Industrial Revolution has not affected India as much as other countries. Without going into all these changes in detail, some aspects of them might be worthy of consideration here. Industrialism has resulted in greater production and greater wealth, in the concentration of wealth in a few countries and a few individuals and a more unequal distribution of wealth. It has resulted in a struggle for raw material and markets, and has thus brought into existence the imperialism of the last century. It has caused wars and has given rise to the colonial empires of to-day. It has laid the seed of future wars. And latterly it has taken the shape of an economic imperialism which, without the possession of territory, is as efficient and potent in exploiting other countries as any colonial empire of yesterday. All this is well known but what is perhaps not sufficiently realised is the international charactor of industrialism. It has broken down national boundaries and has made each nation, however powerful it may be, dependent on other countries. The idea of nationalism is almost as strong to-day as it was and in its holy name wars are fought and millions slaughtered. But in is a myth which is not in keeping with reality. The world has become internationalised ; production is international, markets are international and transport is international, only men's ideas continue to be governed by a dogma which has no real meaning to-day. No nation is really independent, they are all interdependent. The world of reality has changed utterly but our ideas continue in the old rut and thus conflicts arise and society is ever in a ferment.

And if there is a conflict between facts and ideas in the West, how much more do we see it in India ? Many of us, regardless of what is happening all around us still live in the ancient past, and imagine that we can have it back again. Some want the Vedic age, others a reproduction of the early democratic days of Islam. But

> **"The moving finger writes ;**
> **And having writ, moves on :**

**Not all thy piety nor wit**
**Shall lure it back to cancel half a line."**

We forget that our ancient civilizations, great as they are, were meant for different ages and differing conditions. We cannot have to-day, in an industrial age, an early agrarian economy such as we had in Vedic times ; much less can we have in our country a civilization meant for a desert country more than 1,300 years ago. And many of our traditions and habits and customs, our social laws, our caste system, the position we give to women, and the dogmas which religion has imposed on us, are the relics of a past, suitable in those far-off days but utterly out of joint with modern condition. They are shibboleths to-day, in conflict with reality. Men's ideas may lag behind but it is not possible to arrest the course of time and the evolution of life.

But where there is conflict between the two, there is friction, and stagnation and progress is slow. Where ideas come into line with realities the fortunate country advances with a bound. Thus we have the instance of defeated, backward, disorganised and dogma-ridden Turkey changing suddenly, almost overnight, into a great and rapidly progressing country under the inspiring leadership of Kamal Pasha. We have also the instance of Russia, where a demoralised, illiterate and disunited people were changed into men of heroic mould, who faced and conquered war, famine and disease and a world of enemies. So also will India progress when she discards the myths and dogmas in favour of the reality of to-day.

*We thus see that the world has now become a delicate and complicated organism, each part depending on the other, and none wholly capable of standing apart. How then can India ignore rest of the world or keep herself in splendid isolation ? India must understand world forces and take her proper share in the shaping of them. India must also get her ideas in line with facts and realities. The day she does so, her progress will be stupendous.*

I have referred to industrialism and its effects on the modern world. Its evils are obvious and many of us dislike them intensely. But whether we like them or not we must realise that the spread of industrialism cannot be checked. Even in India it is taking giant strides and no country can stop its onward march. Must we also succumb to all the evils which come in its trains or is it fruitful for us to adopt industrialism without its major evils ? We must remember that industrialism means the big machine and the machine is but a tool to be

used for good or ill. Let us not blame the tool if the man who holds it misuses it and causes injuries thereby.

**In the West industrialism has led to big scale capitalism and imperialism. Many of us who denounce British imperialism in India do not realise that it is not phenomenon peculiar to the British race or to India, or that it is the necessary consequence of industrial development on capitalist lines.** For capitalism necessarily leads to exploitation of one man by another, one group by another and one country by another. Therefore we are opposed to this imperialism and exploitation. We must also be opposed to capitalism as a system and to the domination of one country over another. The only alternative that is offered to us is some form of socialism, that is the state-ownership of the means of production and distribution. We cannot escape the choice and if we really care for a better order of society and for ending the exploitation of man by man, we cannot but cast our weight on the side of socialism.

And if we so decide what consequences follow? The necessary result is that we must not only fight British dominion in India on nationalistic ground but also on social and industrial grounds. This is all the more necessary as the modern form of imperial domination is not the old crude method of possession of territory, but the subtler way of economic imperialism. England may well permit us to have a larger measure of political liberty but this will be worth little if she holds economic dominion over us. And no Indian, capitalist or socialist, if he appreciates the full significance of this new slavery, can willingly submit to it.

Another consequence that must follow the adoption of the socialistic view-point is our changing all such customs as are based on privilege and birth, and caste and the like. From our future society we must cast out all parasites, so that the many who lack utterly the good things of life may also share in them to some extent. We must remember that poverty and want are no longer economic necessities ; although under the present anarchic capitalist system they may be inevitable. The world and our country produce enough or can produce enough for the masses to attain a high standard of well-being, but unhappily the good things are covered by a few and millions live in utter want. In India, the classic land of famine, famines are not caused by want of food but by the want of money to buy food. We have famines of money, not food.

The third consequence will affect our international contact

and our international outlook. If we are opposed to imperialism and know that this is a phase of capitalism we must oppose the latte wherever we may meet it. England as a premier capitalistic and imperialistic Power becomes our chief opponent in this field also, and there can be no effective co-operation between India and England so long as she does not come into line with modern progressive thought.

In the light of these considerations let us briefly examine the question of independence for India. Even if the National Congress had not pronounced in its favour, I am sure none of you would require to be converted to it. But some of our elders and friends suffer strangely from various complexes and delusions and the British Empire is one of them. They cannot get out of the professions and habits of a lifetime, nor can they rid themselves of the chains of their own fashioning. What is the British Empire to-day ? "The third British Empire" as an ardent advocate has called it. If we leave out India and the dependencies, it is like the farmer's cat in Alice in Wonder Land whose body has entirely disappeared and only the Jin has remained. How long can this disembodied Jin remain, I leave it to you to judge. The world has judged already and few imagine that it will endure long. The Empire is fast approaching dissolution and world crisis may end it. The British people have shown extraordinary ability in adapting themselves to changing circumstances and to this they owe their strength and the long lease of power that they have enjoyed. But the world is moving too fast for them and recent events, specially in relation to India, indicate that their old skill is gone. But whether the Empire endures or not, how can India find a place in it when her national and international and economic interests conflict with it in almost every vital matter ? We must recognise internationalism of to-day and act internationally if we are to face realities. We cannot be independent in the narrow sense. When we talk of independence we mean the severance of the British connection. Afterwards we can develope the friendliest contact with other countries including England. The British Commonwealth, in spite of its high sounding name, does not stand for this international co-operation, and in its world policy has consistently stood for a narrow and selfish ideal and against the peace of the world.

*If independence is our only and inevitable goal we cannot in logic in decency ask the British to protect us from other foreign countries. I am wholly prepared to accept the argument that if we want British*

*help to defend our frontiers we are not fit for independence.* But I wholly deny that we cannot face the risk of foreign invasion without British aid. No country is strong enough to-day with the possible exception of the United States of America, to withstand a group of hostile countries. England certainly is not. But no one will say that England should, therefore, be deprived of her independence and put under alien control. The security of a country depends on many factors, on its relations with its neighbours and on the world situation generally. If the problem of the Indian defence is examined in the light of these factors the strength of India becomes obvious. She has no great dangers to face and in a military sense she is by no means weak. But even if there was danger, it is shameful and cowardly to seek for help from a nation which was in the past and is to-day oppressing us and preventing all growth. Whatever independence may or may not mean and whether we use that word or another, the one thing that we must keep in the forefront of our programme is the immediate withdrawal of the British army of occupation from this country. That is the real meaning of freedom. Unless that takes place, all other talk is merely moonshine.

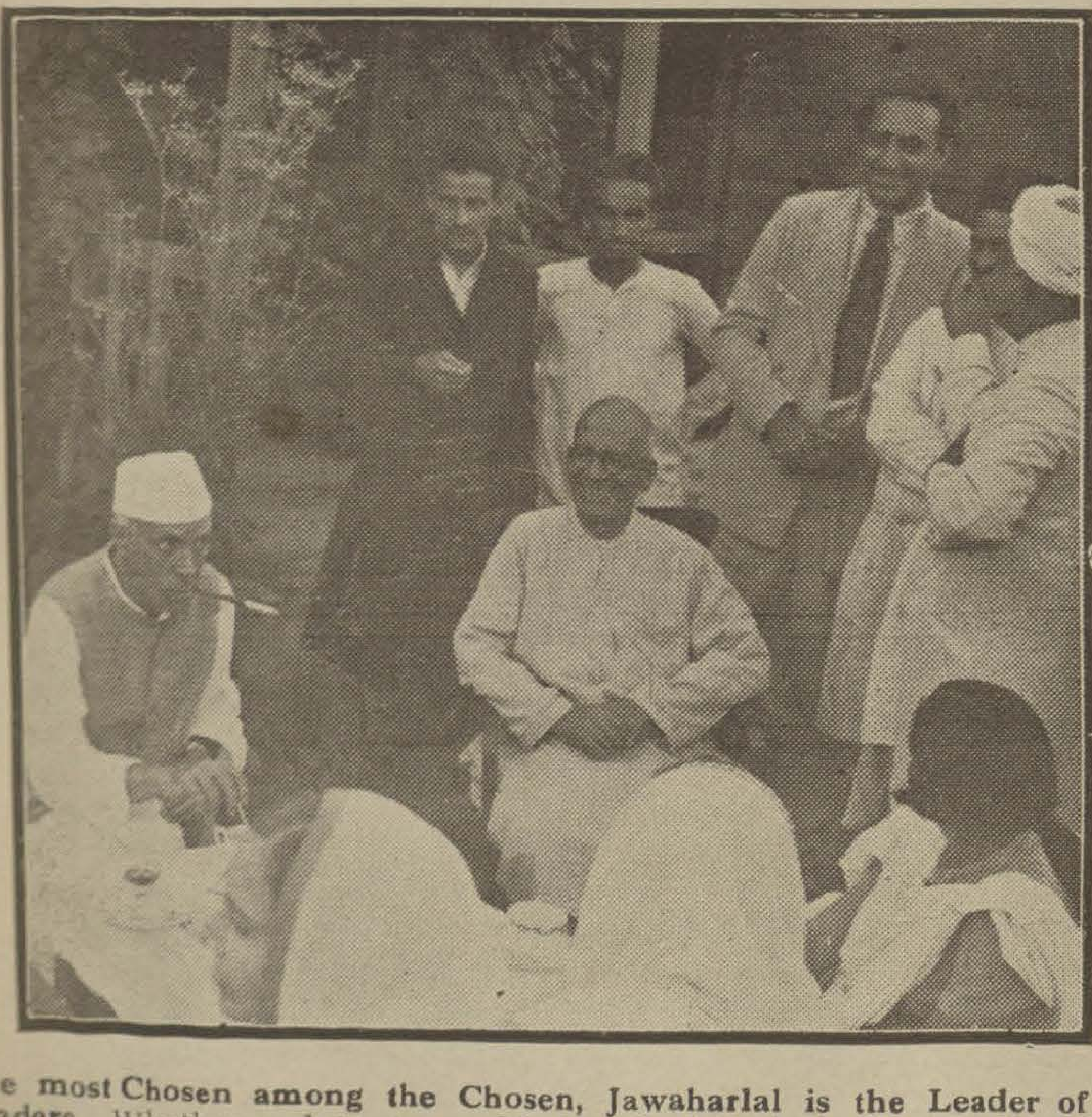
We may demand freedom for our country on many grounds Ultimately it is the economic problem that matters. Our educated classes have so far taken the lead in the fight for *Swaraj*. The economic pressure on them was considerable and others were only vocal elements; and so the demand has taken the form occasionally of Indianisation of services, of higher posts being thrown open to Indians. They are to blame for these demands. They have acted as every class conscious of its interests acts. But in doing so they have seldom paid heed to deeds of the masses. Whenever vital questions affecting the masses have arisen, they have been shelved, they have asked to stand over till *Swaraj* has been attained! Why confuse the issue now? It has been said, we can settle our problems later. Like all class-conscious groups, they have considered themselves the most vital elements in the nation and in the name of freedom have really sought to advance their own interests and many of our intellectuals have become staunchest defenders of the privileges of empire as soon as they had their share of the titles and power. What shall it profit the masses of this country—the peasantry, the landless labourers, the workers, the shopkeepers, the artisans—if everyone of the offices held by Englishmen in India is held by Indians? It may benefit them a little as they can bring more pressure to bear on their own people than on

an alien Government. But fundamentally this condition cannot improve until the social fabric is changed, and I think that the only effective change can be the formation of a democratic socialistic State. But even from the narrow point of view of our intellectuals, it is now well recognised that no effective pressure can be brought to bear on the British Government without mass support. But inspite of recognition there is the fear of the masses and little is done. Mass support cannot come for vague ideal of *Swaraj*. It can only come when the masses realise what *Swaraj* means for them. Therefore it is essential that we must clearly lay down an economic programme, must have an ultimate ideal in view and must also provide for the immediate steps to be taken to bring them relief.

*Our ideal thus can only be an independent democratic State and I would add a socialistic State, and for this we must work. What can be our methods? This is a revolutionary change from present conditions and revolutionary changes cannot be brought about by reformist tactics and methods.* The reformer who is afraid of radical change or of overthrowing an oppressive regime and seeks merely to eliminate some of its abuses, becomes in reality one of its defenders. We must, therefore, cultivate a revolutionary outlook, one that devises a radical and far-reaching change, and not merely that halting outlook of the half-hearted reformer. The way of violence not being open to us in our present conditions, the only other course is some form of non-co-operation. Everything that goes towards creating a revolutionary atmosphere helps everything that lessens its hinderances. I use the word 'revolutionary' in its proper sense without any necessary connection with violence. Indeed, violence may be, and I think this is to-day in India the very reverse of revolution. Acts of terrorism of a hero have counter-revolutionary effect and for this reason alone, apart from any other reasons, are injurious to the national cause. No nation has yet been built upon such individual acts of terrrorism.

There was a great controversy in this country some years ago on the merits of Council entry and the echoes of it still linger. It almost became a creed, a religious issue, a matter of faith. But the sole test of this, as of others, is the reaction it produces on the national mind. I can quite conceive work in the councils helping us to produce the right atmosphere in some measure. But it will only do so if it is carried on the right spirit and with the ideal always in view, not with

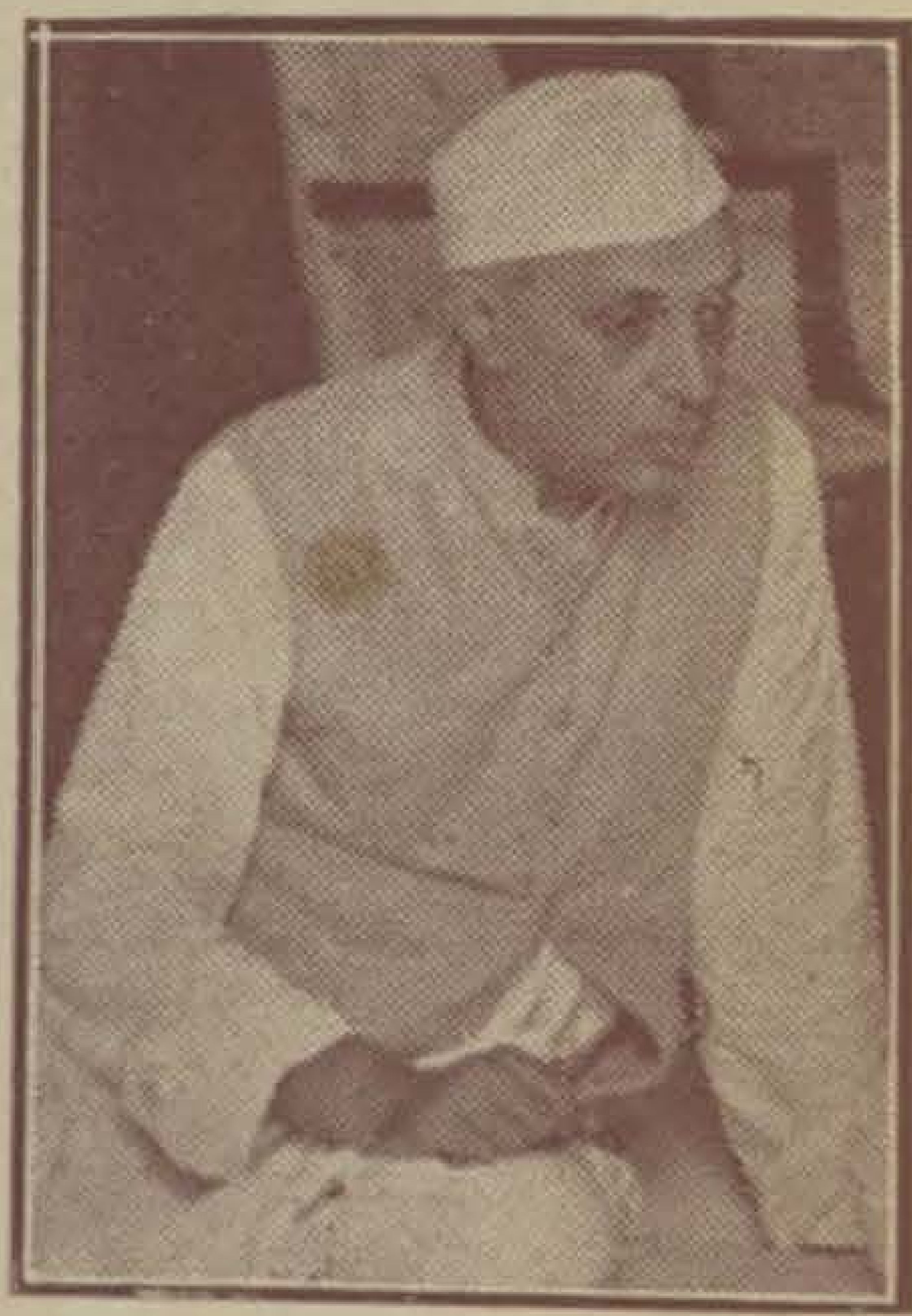




**The most Chosen among the Chosen, Jawaharlal is the Leader of the Leaders.** Whether replying to an address or engaged in an easy discussion, the elite of India listen to him with rapt attention.







**Man of Mind and Might,** Jawaharlal allows his head, heart and hands to play their appropriate roles in conveying his innermost feelings, profoundest thoughts and most valuable observations to the millions of his countrymen from Ceylon to Srinagar. Unlike Hitler and Mussolini who displayed an exuberance of feelings, a masterly suppression of emotions marks the speeches of Jawaharlal.

the desire to pursue better reformist tactics. I must confess, however, that the able and decorous parliamentarians who through our councils cannot be mistaken for revolutionaries anywhere.

But you will tell me that all this may be very good but it is very vague. The real problem before you is how to exercise communalism. I have already indicated to you the kind of India that I should like to build up. There is place for communalism or a dogma-ridden people in it. *Communalism, of course, has to be fought ruthlessly and suppressed. But I really do not think that it is such a power as it is made out to be. It may be giant to-day, but it has feet of clay. It is the outcome largely of anger and passion and when we regain our tempers it will fade into nothingness. It is a myth with no connection with reality and it cannot endure. It is really the creation of our educated classes in search of office and employment.* How does the economic interest of a Hindu or Muslim or Sikh differ from each other? Certainly not, because they have to profess different faiths. It may be that if there is a va cancy for a judgeship of a High Court, or a like occasion, the raising of the communal issue may profit an individual. But how does it generally profit his community? What does it matter to the Muslim peasant whether a Hindu or a Muslim is a judge in Lahore? Economic interests run along different lines. There is a great deal in common between the Muslim and Sikh and Hindu zamindars: and great deal in common between the Muslim and Sikh and Hindu peasantry; very little in common between a Muslim peasant and a Muslim zamindar. We must, therefore, begin to think of an act on like economic issues. If we do so, the myth of communalism will automatically disappear. Conflict there may be, but it will be between different classes and not different religions.

What communal interests are sought to be protected? I think fundamentally they are cultural. Every country in the world has cultural minorities and it is a well-recognised principle that such minorities should have the fullest autonomy so far as their culture is concerned. So also in India every considerate cultural group should be given freedom and, indeed, should be encouraged to preserve and cultivate its culture. Only thus can we build up a rich and varied and yet common culture for India. Culture would include the question of language, education and schools.

If this culture question is settled satisfactorily, and

sufficient safeguards are provided for the interests of minorities and groups which may be in danger of suppression, what remains of communalism ? If in addition we replace our present system of territorial election by some method of election by economic units, we not only introduce a more efficient and progressive system, but also do away with the problem of joint and separate electorates and the reservation of seats. It is generally recognised now, or it ought to be, that separate electorates, which are meant to protect the interests of minorities, really injure them and reduce their effective power in the state. If anybody should be against that, it is the minority. But such is the power of a myth that many of us have come to believe that separate electorates are a "valued privilege" to which we must cling on. I think a little clear thinking will convince any person who is not a bigot on the subject that separate electorates are not only a danger to the State but specially to the minority community. Personally I am not in favour of territorial election at all, but if it is retained I am wholly opposed to separate electorates.

I do not fancy reservation of seats on a communal basis either, but if this solution pleases people I would agree to it. We have to face realities, and the fact remains that many people feel strongly on these subjects. I am quite certain that any arrangement that may be arrived at will be of a provisional nature only. A few of us cannot bind down future generations and I trust that those who come after us will look upon all problems entirely free from all religious and communal taints. It is necessary, however, for such of us as do not believe in communalism and religion interfering with political and economic matters, to take up a strong attitude now and not permit the extremists to have it all their own way.

In the course of this fairly long address, I have meagerly referred to the Simon Commission. I have done so partly because the problem we have to face is a much bigger one and partly because none of you here want any argument from me to boycott it. That boycott is going to continue in spite of the dejection of weak-hearted individuals and of well-meant attempts to "bridge the gulf."

The gulf will not be so easily bridged. And it is a folly to deceive ourselves that it can be easily bridged. Before a new bridge is bulit on the basis of friendship and co-operation, the

present chains which tie us to England must be severed. Only then can real co-operation take place. It may be that a few of us are over-keen even now to find a way to lead them to the pleasant and sheltered paths of co-operation. If so they are welcome to them but they will be to none of us. We shall carry on this boycott regardless of back-striders. But a boycott of the Commission confined to public meetings and resolutions is the feeblest of methods. How can we make it really effective?

A boycott of British goods has been suggested and we are fully entitled to have it. I hope we shall carry it on to the best of our ability. But we must know that such a general boycott justified as it is on sentimental grounds cannot take us far. The only real thing that can be boycotted is British cloth. Can we bring about an effective boycott of British cloth? The present position stated roughly is, I believe, as follows: Our mills in India produce one-third of the cloth consumed by us; our handloom weavers produce another third and we import from foreign countries the remaining third, of this over 90 per cent. being English.

*There is a strong movement in the country to-day to boycott British cloth only. This is perfectly justified and if we could do so we would force the bonds of England. But there is the serious danger of our failing to do so. If we permit other foreign cloth to come in, British cloth will then creep in the guise of Japanese or some other foreign cloth and it will be impossible both for the ordinary purchaser or the retailer to distinguish between the two. This practical difficulty seems to be inseparable and it would thus appear that in order to boycott British cloth we must boycott all foreign cloth. Another advantage this would bring us would be that* khadi *and mill-cloth in India would co-operate with each other for the boycott.* If we favour other foreign cloth, there can be no co-operation between the mills and the *khadi* producers in India. We must therefore concentrate on the boycott of all foreign cloth, thereby also helping tremendously our manufacture. A boycott of foreign cloth to-day really means boycott of British cloth. It means our displacing one-third of the cloth we consume and which comes from foreign countries by cloth manufactured by us. This should offer no great difficulty, if our *khadi* organisation and our cotton mills co-operate in the task instead of competing with each other. It is well known that *khadi* can be produced in almost unlimited quantities at short notice if there is demand for it. Our mills even with their existing

machinery can also greatly increase their output. Thus there is no doubt that we are in a position to produce enough to boycott foreign cloth totally and in the near future, provided only the will to do so is present. It is for the public to express this will. If they do so, all other difficulties will disappear. We cannot expect those who profit by the import of foreign cloth to feel enthusiastic over the boycott ; it must cause loss to the importers and others in the trade. But are we to sacrifice the interest of India and her millions for the sake of a handful of importers. Most of our mill-owners also have not a good record. They have in the past sought to profit by national sentiment in India, they have taken enormous dividends and yet have treated piteously the poor workers who were the foundations of their fortunes. To-day instead of combating foreign cloth, many of them are competing with coarse *khadi* and are thus profiting even by the *khadi* sentiment of the people. If they could see far enough and knew their real interest, they would realise that their progress is bound up with the good-will of the people, and their whole-hearted co-operation in the boycott would benefit them even more than it would the nation as a whole. But this co-operation can only be based on a full justice to the workers in their mills and the minimum of profit.

An effective boycott is clearly possible with *khadi* and Indian mill-cloth co-operating. Even if only a few mill-owners are agreeable to our conditions we can work with them, and I am sure that others will be drawn into our movement later. But if there is to be no co-operation with the mills, what can we do then ? Our duty is clear. We must, by concentrating on *khadi* only, bring these misguided owners to reason and make this boycott of cloth as effective as we can.

I have in an earlier part of this address referred to the coming of industrialism to India and have stated that I believe it to be an inevitable process. I have no objection to the big or small machine and I think that properly used they can be made to serve man and not to dominate over him. And yet I have advocated the use of *khadi* also. I have done so, because I am convinced that in our present conditions and in the future for sometime, *khadi* is a boon to the poverty-stricken millions of India. I cannot say if *khudi* will be necessary for us in the distant future. But I can say that to-day it supplies a very real want and wherever it has been produced it has brought a measure of well-being in its train.

The theory of its being an ideal auxiliary to agriculture would prove this ; but if there was any doubt, our experience and the evidence of our eyes has removed it utterly. To bring immediate relief to our long-suffering peasantry, to make India more self-sufficient in the matter of cloth in near future, to make the boycott of foreign cloth successful, *khadi* to-day is essential. The necessity for *khadi* is even greater in case of war of crisis, when automatically foreign imports will cease. How can we satisfy our needs then ; our mills will make vast profits, prices of cloth will sore up and our poor will practically have to go naked. Only *khadi* will meet the situation then. It will supply the growing demand and will force the mills to keep their prices down. So even from the point of view of war *khadi* is a necessity.

But if war comes, and everything indicates that it will come before long, we shall have to face other and more vital problems than that of boycott of foreign cloth. The Madras Congress has given us a lead in this matter and it is for this province to ponder over this lead, for the real burden of action will fall on the Punjab. You and your gallant soldiers have been exploited enough in the past not in India only, but in the four quarters of the world. Even to-day they are made to do the dirty work of British imperialism in China, in Persia and in Mesopotamia, and they are used to suppress people who are our friends and neighbours and who have done us no harm. It is time that we put an end to this shameful exploitation of the courage of our manhood. *We are told that we are not capable of defending our country against the foreign invasion, but our soldiers are capable enough of defending the British Empire, in Europe, in Asia and in Africa. You know how our man-power and our wealth was exploited by the British during the last war.* You know also the measure of return that we got for our help, it was the Rowlatt Act and Martial Law in the Punjab. Are you prepared to be deluded again, to be exploited again and to be thrown into the scrap heap again ? Wise men, they say, profit by the failures and experience of others ; ordinary men by their own experience ; and fools by neither. We may not be very wise, but let us be fools by neither. We may not be very wise, but let us not be fools either. Let us make up our mind now what we shall do when a crisis comes. Let us decide that whatever else we may or may not do, we shall not permit ourselves to be exploited by British imperialism. Let us say with the Madras Congress that if the British Government embarks on any

warlike adventure and endeavours to exploit India, it will be our duty to refuse to take any part in such a war or to co-operate with them in any way whatsoever. This will be no easy matter. It will mean our having to face and endure fines and hardship, but if we have the courage to face them and the capacity to endure them to the end and the statesmanship not to compromise. We shall emerge triumphant from this ordeal and our dear country which has so long suffered alien domination will be free again.

## CHAPTER X

# Revolt of Youth

**[In this speech there is a strong invitation to young men and women to revolt, not so much against British imperialism as against the imperialism of society, tradition, religion and a slavish mentality. It is the full text of Jawaharlal's presidential address delivered at the Bombay Presidency Youth Conference held at Poona on the 12th of December, 1928. Youth is the very embodiment of revolt and revolt is the very quintessence of youth. Consequently don't forget the spirit of adventure and dare-devilry.]**

Friends and Comrades,

**I am a little tired and weary of conferences and a little doubtful of the extent of their utility. But even though my enthusiasm for conferences may have wanted, my attraction to a conference of youths remains, for it is so unlike the gatherings of older folk. Many of you also, it may be, when you grow older, may unhappily fall into the ancient ruts and forget the spirit of adventure and dare-devilry which was yours when you were young.** But to-day you are young and full of enthusiasm and I, with the years creeping on me, have come to you to be a sharer in your abounding hope and courage and to take back with me to my daily work some measure of your faith and enthusiasm. I have come because the call of youth is an imperative one and few can say no to it, and when this call came from you, young men and women of Bombay who have been the leaders in the recent awakening of youth in this country, I appreciated the honour all the more and gratefully accepted it.

Why do people meet in conferences? Why have you

met here to-day? Not surely just to deliver speeches and listen to them or as a mere diversion from your work and play. Not simply to play a prominent part in the political or social arena, to become a celebrity and be intoxicated by the applause of the multitude. You have met here, I take it, because you are not content with things as they are and seek to change them. Because you do not believe that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Because you feel the weight on your young shoulders of the sorrow and misery of this country and this world of ours, and with the energy and fine temper of youth you believe that you have it in you to remove this load of sorrow or at least to lessen its weight. If this is the urge that has brought you here then you have met well and out of your meeting and deliberations something of permanent good might emerge. But if you are not dissatisfied with existing conditions, if you have not felt this urge which makes you restless and drives and lashes you to action, then wherein do you differ from the gathering of older people who talk and debate and argue much and act little? It is not those who are continually seeking security and have made a good of discretion who reform the world. It is not the sleek and shiny people having more than their share of this world's good who are the apostles of change. The world changes and progresses because of those who are disaffected and dissatisfied and who are not prepared to tolerate the evils and injustice of things as they are or have them.

The basis of society is some measure of security and stability. Without security and stability there could be no society or social life, but how many to-day in our present day society have this security and stability? You know that the millions have it not; they have hardly food enough to keep body and soul together and it is a mockery to speak to them of security. So long as the masses do not share in this security you can have no stable society. And so you see in the history of the world revolution after revolution, not because any group or person is a lover of bloodshed, anarchy and disorder but because of this desire for greater security for larger number of persons. We shall have real security and stability in this world only when it has come to signify the well-being of the vast mojority of the people, if not all, and not of small groups only. That time may not be near, but society is continually, sometimes it may even a little blindly, struggling towards it. And the greater the struggle the greater the urge to that end, the healthier and more vital the society. If this

urge is wholly absent society becomes static and lifeless and gradually withers away.

*So long therefore as the world is not perfect, a healthy society must have the seeds of revolt in it. It must alternate between revolution and consideration. It is the function of youth to supply this dynamic element in society; to be the standard-bearers of revolt against all that is evil and to prevent older people from suppressing all social progress and movement by the mere weight of their inertia.*

Many of you may wonder why I am addressing you in this somewhat academic vein. I do partly because I am no orator and platform hero and partly because I feel that most of our troubles are due to a false ideology. Foreign, political and economic domination is bad enough, but the acceptance by us of ideology of our rulers is to my mind even worse, for it stunts all efforts and sends us wandering aimlessly in blind alleys with no opening. I want, therefore, as far as I can, to get my own thinking straight and to remove the cobwebs from my brain and I should like you also to do likewise. It will do us little good to repeat the political catch-words of the day without clear thinking on our part as to what we are aiming at and how we can attain our goal. I shall welcome your agreement with me but that would mean little if it has not been preceded by thought and conviction. I am much more concerned with finding in you a true appreciation of the present condition of the world, a passionate desire to better it, and an earnest spirit of enquiry as to what to do and how to do it. Reject utterly what I say to you if you think it is wrong. But reject also everything, however hallowed it may be by tradition and convention and religious sanction, if your reason tells you that it is wrong or unsuited to the present condition. For "religions" as the Chinese say, "are many, but reason is one."

What do we find in this world of ours to-day? Utter misery is the lot of vast numbers of people and while a few live in luxury the many lack even bread and clothing and have no opportunity for development. Wars and conflicts ravage the world and the energy that should go to build up a better order of society is spent largely in mutual competition and destruction. If that is the condition of the world at large what of our own unhappy country? Foreign rule has reduced her to utmost poverty and misery and a rigid adherence to outworn customs and ideas has sapped the life out of her.

There is obviously something radically wrong with the

world and one is led to doubt if there is any ultimate purpose behind this chaos and unhappiness. Two thousand five hundred years ago the Prince Siddhartha, who latter became the Great Buddha, saw this misery and in agony of spirit put himself the same question :

*How can be that Brahma*
*Would make a world and keep it miserable ?*
*Since if all powerful He leaves it so,*
*He is not good, and if not powerful,*
*He is not God !*

But whether there is any ultimate purpose or not, the immediate purpose of every human being should be to reduce this misery and to help in building up a better society, and a better society must necessarily aim at the elimination of all domination of one nation over another or of man over man. It must replace competition by co-operation.

You have probably often condemned British imperialism because you suffer under it. But have you thought it is but a manifestation, certainly the most objectionable and aggressive manifestation, of a world phenomenon ? And that this world imperialism is the direct outcome of a system of society which prevails in the greater part of the world to-day and is called capitalism. Your immediate problem and mine is to gain political freedom for our country, but this is only part of problem facing us. So long as imperialism is not rooted out mankind will be exploited and oppressed by a few. It may be that some of us may join the ranks of the exploiters, but that will not bring freedom to the many. We must aim, therefore, at the destruction of all imperialism and the reconstruction of society on another basis. That basis must be one of co-operation, and that is another name for socialism. Our national ideal must, therefore, be the establishment of a co-operative socialist commonwealth and our international ideal a world federation of socialist states.

Before we approach our ideal we have to combat two sets of opponents—political and social. We have to overcome our alien rulers as well as the social reactionaries of India. In the past we have seen the curious phenomenon in India of the political extremist sometimes being a reactionary in social matters, and not unoften the political moderate has been socially more advanced. But it is impossible to separate the political life of the country from its social and

economic life and you cannot cure the social organism by treating one part of it only. The infection from one affected part continually spreads to other parts and the disease takes firmer root. Your political and social philosophy must, therefore, be a complete whole and your programme must comprise every department of national activity.

It is clear to-day, even if there was some doubt of it in the past, that the social reactionary is the ally of those who wish to keep India in subjection. If any proof was needed of this self-evident fact, the events of the past few months have provided it. You have seen and you have helped in the magnificent boycott of the Simon Commission. You have also seen how some people and some groups have co-operated with this Commission and joined in welcoming it in defiance of the national will. Who are these people and these groups? Almost invariably you will find that they are the social reactionaries, communalists, those who want favours and privileges for themselves at the expense of the larger community.

**An even more striking instance of the alliance of political and social reaction is the attitude of the present Government in India towards measures of social reform. Efforts made by the representatives of the people to get rid of harmful social customs are checkmated by Government and our society cannot progress sufficiently fast or adapt itself to changing circumstances largely because of official opposition.** The British Government of India have become the self-constituted guardians of Hindu and Muslim customs and traditions. Recently in the debates in the Assembly on the Public Safety Bill it was a touching sight to see the spokesmen of Government waxing eloquent on the beauties of Hindu and Islamic ideals of society and pointing out in woeful accents the terrible upheavals that would follow the spread of socialistic and communistic ideas. It would almost appear that the British occupants of the official benches in the Assembly were on the verge of being won over by the enthusiasts for *Shuddhi* or *Tabligh*—it was not quite clear which they favoured most. It is a strange sight with a moral that none can miss, to see the Christian rulers of India pretending to become the bulwarks of Hinduism and Islam.

*Religion has in the past often been used as an opiate to dull men's desire for freedom. Kings and Emperors have exploited it for their own benefit and led people to believe in their divine right to rule. Priests and other privileged classes have claimed a divine sanction for their privileges. And with the aid of religion the masses have been told that*

*their miseries are due to* kismat *or the sins of a former age.* Women have been and are still kept down and in the name of religion in many places are made to submit to that barbarous relic of an earlier age—the *purdah* system. The depressed or the suppressed classes cry out to the world how infamously religion has been exploited to keep them down and prevent them from rising. Religion has been the fountain-head of authoritarianism and meek submission and it is because our rulers realise this and because their own rule is based on this ideology of authoritarianism that they seek to bolster up its cruder manifestations in India. If the spirit of intellectual revolt spreads to ancient custom and tradition, then the very basis of authoritarianism crumbles and takes with it the foundation of British Rule.

In India to-day and indeed in the world there is a great deal of argument and debate on matters political and social. From all this argument two sets of opposing ideas emerge. One is the reformist idea which believes in a gradual betterment with the consent of those in power or in positions of privilege to-day. It believes in a slow evolutionary process. In the political field it believes in the achievement of Dominion Status by agreement or consent of the British ; in the economic field it relies on a gradual conquest of power from the capitalist and the landholder with their consent also, though this may be grudging and partial ; in the purely social domain reforms are to come by the slow displacement of the parties of privilege. The other idea is the revolutionary one which seeks rapid change and does not believe in the holders of power ever giving it up unless they are forced to do so. Consent come in here also ; but it is the unwilling and forced consent of the vanquished.

These rival ideas are fighting for mastry to-day. There is little doubt as to which will emerge victorious in the end. To a large extent both the evolutionary and the revolutionary methods work side by side. Every revolution is preceded by a process of evolution and preparation. But the difference in ideology is of vital importance and therefore it becomes essential for you to make your choice and throw all your strength and might on the side you favour.

*If any of you believe that you can force power out of those who possess to-day by sweet reason and argument, then all I can say is that you have not read history with much profit nor have paid much heed to recent events in India. The problem before us is the problem of the*

*conquest of power.* In our Councils and Assemblies where fine speeches, however strongly worded they may be, do not affect the seat of power, we see an outward show of argument and reason, although even then the attitude of official spokesmen is often insulting and overbearing. But go outside to the fields and the market-place and you will find that whenever there is a clash between the popular will and the will of the Government, however peaceful the people may be, the Government meets them, not by argument and reason, but by the bayonet and the policeman's baton, by shooting and sometimes by martial law. The fundamental fact of the situation is the bayonet and baton. How can you argue or be sweetly reasonable with cold steel and dead wood ? You must meet them, if you wish to overcome them, by other methods; by the development of sanctions greater and more powerful than the bayonet and baton that face you.

*The Government, it is said, must preserve law and order. What matters it, if this results in the gravest disorder and in death and injury to the people ? Every Indian knows the crimes that have been and are being committed in the name of law and order, and yet there aree some of us still who are obsessed by this notion. Law and order ar the last refuge of the reactionary, of the tyrant and of him who has power and refuses to part with it. There can be no law or order til freedom comes, for as the French philosopher Proudhon said, "Liberty is not the daughter but the mother of order."*

The advocates of reformism make earnest and eloquent pleas for change. With an advocate zeal they try to score fine legal points over their adversaries. But their forensic ability is wasted on their opponents who carry on unmoved, well knowing that their power is not threatened by such method ; it rests on the solid steel of the bayonet. And unhappily even the common man on whose behalf the reformists argue, is unmoved, by their argument. He does not understand it, nor is any great attempt made to make him understand. All the energy is spent in compromises between the leaders, in efforts to lull various vested interests and the masses are ignored. Is it any wonder that the masses in their turn remain apathetic and do not respond to the call of leaders ? The head of the nation is so far away from the rest of the body that the trunk can hardly see it.

It is not thus that freedom has been won and greater changes brought about. The voice that claims it must be the voice of revolt, the dull and threatening roar from a hundred

thousand and a million throats, not the sweetly modulated tones of an accomplished debator. When that voice is raised, England, as she has always done in the past, will bow to the inevitable. But if that voice is not raised, do not imagine that you can hoax or trick the English people out of power.

*The noise of the masses will only be raised if you put before them an ideal and a programme which affects them and improves their economic condition. And when raised, it will only be followed by action if the end in view is worth the struggle and sacrifice.*

The governor of the province I come from, recently, following the tradition of his tribe, gave advice to the Taluqdars of Oudh. He told them to choose their allies wisely. That advice I heartily commend to you although it is highly probable that my choice and yours will be very different from that of Governor Heiley. In choosing your allies you have to see who are the vital elements in the nation and who are the parties ; who are going to profit by the freedom of India and who are those who profit by the British exploitation of your country. Choose the former and do not waste your time and energy in trying to appease or win over the latter. Above all ally yourself to the masses of the country—the peasantry and the industrial workers—and think in terms of them when you envisage a free India. And if you do so you will automatically avoid the pitfalls of reformism and petty compromise. You will have your pulse on reality and your programme will be a live programme with the sanction of the masses behind it. And freedom for the masses must inevitably mean the end of British as well as all other exploitation. It must mean the independence of India and the reconstruction of Indian society on the basis of social and economic equality.

The freedom of India is dear to all of us here. But there may be many here who have the ordinary convenience of life and are not hard put to it to find their daily bread. *Our desire for freedom is a thing more of the mind than of the body, although even our bodies often suffer for the lack of freedom. But to the vast masses of our fellow-countrymen present conditions spell hunger and deepest poverty, and empty stomach and a bare back. For them freedom is a vital bodily necessity, and it is primarily to give them food and clothing and the ordinary amenities of life that we should strive for freedom.* The most amazing and terrible thing about India is her poverty. It is not a dispensation from Providence or an inevitable condition of society. India has enough or can have enough for all her children if an alien government and some of her own sons did not corner the good things and

so deprive the masses of their dues. "Poverty," said Ruskin, "is not due to natural inferiority of the poor or the inscrutable laws of God, or drink, but because others have picked their pockets." And the control of wealth by the few not only means the unhappiness of many but it exercises a power over men's minds so that they do not wish for freedom. It is this mental outlook which paralyses the poor and the oppressed and it is this mentality of defeatism that you will have to fight.

You have been the leaders of the youth movement in India and you have built up a strong and living organism. But remember that organisations and institutions are passive instruments of man. They become living and vital only when they are pushed onward by the strength of great ideas. Have great ideals before you and do not lower them by ignorable compromise. Look deep down to where the millions toil in field and factory and look across the frontiers of India to where others like you are facing problems similar to yours. Be national, the sons and daughters of your ancient motherland working for her liberation ; and be international, members of the Republic of Youth, which knows no boundaries or frontiers or nationalities and works for the liberation of the world from all thraldom and injustice. "To do great things," said a Frenchman many years ago, "a man must live as if he had never to die." None of us can evade death, but youth at least does not think of it. Old men work for the span of years that still remain for them ; the young work for eternity.

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## CHAPTER XI

# The Empire of Youth

**[If a youth cannot be scratched out of his lethargy by this message, he cannot be stirred at all. This is the full text of the presidential address delivered at the All-Bengal Students Conference held in Calcutta on September 22, 1928. The youth must awaken themselves, says Nehru, if they are not to be caught napping and build the International Commonwealth of Youth. The future of the world lies in the hands of the world youth.]**

Young men and and women of Bengal,

You have done me honour in inviting me to preside over this gathering of the youths of Bengal, and I am grateful for it. But I have wondered what you wished me to say or do, what kind of message to deliver. I have no special message and you know well that I **am no weaver of the fine phrases or trafficker in eloquence. To Bengal, justly known for her warm-hearted eloquence and love of art and beauty and passionate emotionalism you have invited a dweller from the colder and sometimes much hotter regions of the north, whose ancestors came not so very long ago from the barren and snow-covered mountains that overlook the vast Indian plain, and I am afraid I carry with me something of the coldness and hardness of that mountain climate.** A very great leader of Bengal and of our country, whose memory we revere to-day, once called me very justly "cold-blooded." I plead guilty to the charge, and since you have taken the risk of inviting me you will have to bear with my cold-bloodedness.

I have begun by drawing your attention to certain minor differences between us a Kashmiri settled in the heart of

Hindustan, which is now called the United Provinces, and the residents of Bengal—and yet you all know how unimportant these differences are and how strong are the common bonds that tie us—the bonds of a common legacy from the past, of common suffering and the hope of building up a great future for this country of yours and mine. And, indeed, you can carry the comparison a little further across the artificial frontiers that separate country from country. We are told of vital differences of race and character. Such differences there undoubtedly are but how many of them are purely accidental due to climate and environment and education and how liable to change they are. You will find that the common bond is greater and more vital than the differences, though many of us may not realize the fact.

It is the realisation of the common bond of humanity that has given rise to the great youth movement of to-day. Many of you may be too young to remember the despair and feeling of revolt in the minds of youth during, and specially after, the Great War. Old men sat in their comfortable cabinets and banking houses and hid their selfishness and greed and lies under a cover of fine phrases and appeals for freedom and democracy. And the young believing in these fine phrases, went out by the millions to face death, and few returned. Seventy millions of them were mobilised and of the fifteen millions that actually served on the front, over eight millions died and over five-and-a-half millions were maimed for life. Think of these terrible figures and then remember that they were all young men with their lives stretching out in front of them and their hopes unfulfilled ! And what did this awful sacrifices bring forth ? A peace of violence and an aggravation of all the ills that the world was suffering from. You remember well that the first fruits of the peace in India were the Rowlatt Act and Martial Law. You know also how the fine principle of self-determination, which the Allies shouted from the house-tops, has been applied to India and to other countries. A new cloak for the greed of the imperialist powers was created in the shape of mandates and in awarding mandates the " principal consideration " was to be the preference of the inhabitants. This preference was shown unaccountably by rebellion against the British in Mesopotamia and rebellion against the French in Syria. But the aeroplane and the bomb was the British answer in Iraq and the ancient and beautiful city of Damascus was reduced to ruins by the French. In Europe itself the peace created far more problems that it solved.

Is it any wonder that the youths of the world rebelled and cast out their old-time leaders on whom even terrible lesson of the war was lost, and who still went on intriguing in the old way, and prepared for yet another and a greater war ? Youth set about organising itself and set out to find the ways and means of establishing an order of society which would put an end to the misery and conflicts of to-day.

*And so the youth of the world probed deeper into the cause of present-day misery. They studied the economic and the social conditions, of the people, and they saw that although science and the changes that science had brought had in a few generations covered the track of centuries, the minds of men still lagged behind and thought in terms of a dead past. Science had made the world international and interdependent, but national rivalries continued and resulted in war. Science had vastly increased production and there was enough for all and to spare but poverty continued and the contrasts between luxury and misery were more marked than ever before. But if maknind is foolish and errs, facts do not adopt themselves to errors and the world of our imagination conflicts with the world of reality and is it any wonder that chaos and misery result ?*

Facts are not to blame for this. The troubles and the difficulties lie rooted in things in our misconception of them and our misinterpretation of them. Our elders fail frequently because they are rigid in their minds and unable to change their mental outlook or adopt themselves to changing facts. But youth is not hidebound. Youth can think and is not afraid of the consequences of thought. Do not imagine that thought is an easy matter or that its consequences are trivial. Thought is not or should not be afraid of the wrath of heavens or the terrors of hell. It is the most revolutionary thing on earth. And it is because youth dare think and dare act that it holds out the promise of taking out this country and this world of ours from the ruts and the mire in which they have sunk.

Are you, young men and women of Bengal, going to dare to think and dare to act ? Are you prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with the youth of the world, not only to free your country from an insolent and alien rule but also to establish in this unhappy world of ours a better and a happier society ? That is the problem before you and if you wish to face it sincerely and fearlessly, you will have to make up your mind to rid yourselves and your country of every obstacle in your path whether it is placed by our alien rules or has the prestige of ancient custom.

**You must have your ideal clear cut before you. How else can you hope to build the great structure of your dream? Can you build a palace on the foundations of a mud-hut, or a fine bridge with straw? With definite ideas of your goal you will gain clearness of purpose and effectiveness of action and each step that you take will carry you nearer to your heart's desire.**

What shall this ideal be? National independence and perfect freedom to develope on the lines of our own choosing is the essential requisite of all progress. Without it there can be no political, economic or social freedom. But national independence should not mean for us merely an addition to the warring groups of nations. It should be a step towards the creation of a world commonwealth of nations in which we can assist in the fullest measure to bring about co-operation and world harmony.

But there can be no world co-operation as long as one country dominates over and exploits another and one group or class exploits another. Therefore we shall have to put an end to all exploitation of man by man or woman by woman. You can not have a purely political ideal, for politics is after all only a small part of life, although situated as we are under alien rule, it dominates every branch of our activity. Your ideal must be a complete whole and must comprise life as it is to day, economic, social as well as political. It can only be a social equality in the widest sense and equality of opportunity for every one. It is notorious that we have neither of these to-day.

Our womenfolk, inspite of the great examples of old that we are so fond of repeating, are shackled and unfree. Large classes of our countrymen have been deliberately suppressed by us in the past and denied all opportunities of growth in the name of religion and ancient practice. And all over India, we see to-day millions toiling in field and factory and starving in spite of their toil. How can we rid these millions of their dire poverty and misery and make them share in the freedom to come? We hear of the service of the poor and sometimes even of the exaltation of the poor. And by a little act of charity or service we imagine that our duty is done. Having reserved very magnanimously the kingdom of heaven for poor we take good care to keep the kingdom of the earth for ourselves. Youth at least should be above this hypocrisy. Poverty is not a good thing; it is not to be exalted or praised but an evil thing

which must be fought and stamped out. The poor require no petty services from us or charity. They want to cease to be poor. That can only come by your changing a system which produces poverty and misery.

In the course of the last few months you have seen the whole of India convulsed in labour troubles. Lock-outs and strikes and shootings have followed one after another. Is it amusing, do you think, to the worker to strike and starve and perhaps be shot ? Surely no one does so unless his lot becomes unbearable. And indeed the lot of the Indian to-day in factory of field is past all endurance. In the jute mills of your province, the profits and reserve accumulations in ten years before 1926 amounted to nearly 440 crores of rupees. Think of this enormous figure and then see the condition of poor workers in these mills. And yet the jute workers, miserable as they are, have gone there because there was no room for them on the land or their conditions on the land were even worse. Can you expect any peace in the land when there is so much misery and so much contrast between wealth and abject poverty?

You cannot ignore these problems or leave them to a future age for solution.

And if you are afraid of tackling them, you will find that facts can only be ignored at your peril. We are sometimes told that we must do justice between landlord and tenant and capitalist and worker, and justice means the maintenance of the *status quo*. It is the kind of justice the League of Nations gives when it maintains the present *status quo* with the imperialist powers dominating and exploiting half the earth. When the *status quo* itself is rank injustice, those who desire to maintain it must be considered as upholders of that injustice.

**If your ideal is to be one of social equality and a world federation then perforce we must work for a socialist state. The word socialism frightens many people in this country but that matters little for fear is their constant companion. Ignorant of everything important that has happened in the world of thought since they left their school books, they fear what they do not and will not understand.**

It is for you, the youth of the country, to appreciate the new forces and ideas that are convulsing the world and to apply them to your own country. For socialism is the only hope for a distraught world to-day. It is interesting to note that during the great war when a great crisis threatend to

engulf the nations of the West, even the capitalist countries of Europe were forced to adopt socialistic measures to a large extent. This was not only done internally in each country, but also enable it to resist the pressure of events, even internationally. There was co-operation in many fields and national boundaries seemed to recede into the back. There was economic co-operation of the closest kind, ultimately even the armies of many nations became one army under a single head. But the lesson of the war has been lost and again we drift towards a greater disaster.

**Socialism frightens some of our friends, but what of communism ? Our elders sitting in their council chambers shake their grey heads and stroke their beards in alarm at the mere mention of the word.**

And yet I doubt if any of them has the slightest knowledge of what communism is. You have read of the two new measures which are being rushed through the Assembly—one of them to throttle the Trade Union Movement, and the other to keep out people whom the Government suspects of communism. Has it struck you that it is a very curious thing that the mighty British Empire with all its tanks and aeroplanes and dreadnaughts should be afraid of a few individuals who come to spread a new idea ? What is there in this new idea that the British Empire should collapse like a pack of cards before this airy nothing ? Surely you could not have better evidence of the weakness of this giant empire which sprawls over the fairest portions of the earth's surface. It is giant with feet of clay. But if an idea is a dangerous thing, it is also a very elusive thing. It crosses frontiers and customs barriers without paying any duty, and bayonets and men of war cannot stop it. The Government of India must be strangely lacking in intelligence if they imagine that they can stop any ideas from entering India by legislation.

What is this communist idea before which the British Empire quakes ? I do not propose to discuss it here, but I wish to tell you that though personally I do not agree with many of the methods of the communists, and I am by no means sure to what extent communism can suit present conditions in India, I do believe in communism as an ideal of society. For essentially it is socialism and socialism, I think, is the only way if the world is to escape disaster.

And Russia, what of her ? An outcaste like us from nations and much slandered and often erring. But inspite of

her many mistakes she stands to-day as the greatest opponent of imperialism and her record with the nations of the East has been just and generous. In China, Turkey and Persia of her own free-will she gave up her valuable rights and concessions, whilst the British bombarded the crowded Chinese cities and killed Chinamen by the hundreds because they dared to protest against British imperialism.

**In the city of Tabriz in Persia, when the Russian Ambassador first came, he called the populace together and on behalf of the Russian nation tendered formal apology for the sins of the Tzars. Russia goes to the East as equal, not as a conqueror or a race-proud superior. Is it any wonder that she is welcomed ?**

Some of you may go in after years to foreign countries for your studies. If you go to England, you will realise in full measure what race prejudice is. If you go to the Continent of Europe, you will be more welcome whether you go to France or Germany or Italy. If any of you go to Russia, you will see how racial feeling is utterly absent and the Chinamen who throng the universities of Moscow are treated just like others.

I have placed before you the ideals of internationalism and socialism as the only ideals worthy of the fine temper of youth. Internationalism can of course only come to us through national independence. It can not come through the British Empire or the British Commonwealth of Nations, call it what you will for that Empire is to-day the greatest foe of internationalism. If in future England choses to enter a real World Federation none will welcome her more than we, but she will have to shed her imperialism before she can enter. Our quarrel is not with the people of England but with the imperialism of England.

I have laid stress on internationalism although it may be a distant ideal for us. But the world is already largely international, although we may not realise it. And situated as we are the reaction against foreign rule is apt to make us narrowly national. We talk of the greatness of India, of her special mission to the world and we love to dwell on her past. It is well that we remember our past, for it was great and worth remembering. But it is for age to look back, youth's eyes should be turned to the future. And I have often wondered if there is any country in the world, any people who do not fancy that they have a special mission for the world. England has her white man's burden which she insists on carrying

in spite of ungrateful people who object and rebel; France has her mission of Civilisation; America is God's own country; Germany has Kultur; Italy has her new gospel of Fascism; and Russia her Communism. And it has been so always. The Jews were the elect of the Lord, and so were the Arabs. Does it not strike you as strange that every country should have the identical notion of having a special mission to reform the world, to enrich its culture in some way, and none need lay claim to being the chosen of the Lord?

Self-admiration is always a dangerous thing in an individual. It is equally dangerous in the nation, for it makes it self-satisfied and indolent and the world passed by leaving it behind. We have little enough reason to be satisfied with our present lot, with many of our customs, with our excessive religiosity, with the sad lot of our women and the terrible condition of the masses. What good does it do us to waste our energy and our time in chanting praises of the dead past when the present claims our attention and work awaits us? The world changes and is changing rapidly and if we cannot adapt our society to the new conditions, we are doomed to perish. We have seen what can be done in a brief span of years and even months by a Kamal Pasha or an Amanullah who were not afraid to break through ancient custom and prejudice. What has been done in Turkey and backward Afghanistan can be done in India. But it can only be done in the manner of Kamal Pasha or Amanullah, by fearlessly facing obstacles and removing them and not waiting till the crack of doom for slow reform. It is not a choice for you as it was not a choice for Turkey or Afghanistan, between slow or rapid reform. It is a choice between extinction and immediate action. Turkey and Afghanistan chose the latter path and are reckoned to-day as great nations. What will your choice be?

*The world is in a bad way and India especially is in a perilous state in spite of glitter and superficial splendour of our great cities. There are rumours of war and awful prophecies that next war may result in irretrievable disaster to civilisation. But the very excess of evil may hasten the cure.*

*Great men have come from age to age in this country and elsewhere to help mankind. But greater than any man is the idea which he has embodied. And the conception of* Dharma *changes from age to age, and in a changing world a custom that was good in the past may be perilous to society to-day. You do not go to Bombay to-day in a bullock-cart or fight with bows and arrows. Why stick to custom which were good only*

*in the days of the bullock-cart and bows and arrows ?*

And the great men who have come have always been rebels against the existing order. Two thousand five hundred years ago the Great Buddha proclaimed his gospel of social equality and fought against all privileges, priestly and otherwise. He was a champion of the people against all who sought to exploit them. Then came another great rebel, Christ and then the Prophet of Arabia, who did not hesitate to break and change almost everything he found. They were Realists who saw that the world had outgrown its ancient practices and sought to bring it back to reality. Even so we have outgrown the creeds and rituals of yesterday and as realists we must not hesitate to discard them wherever they clash with reality. The *avatars* of to-day are great ideas which come to reform the world. And the idea of the day is social equality. Let us listen to it and become its instruments to transform the world and make it a better place to live in.

I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little by myself in spite of my ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working with the awakened youths of this country we can and will achieve. For youth only can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I admire them for having as their war-cry a hymn to youth : *Giovinezza*. And I wish you would also adopt their motto "Live dangerously." Let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, but adventure in a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world and security and stability to the millions who have it not.

**You and I are Indians and to India we owe much, but we are human beings also and to humanity we also owe a debt. Let us be citizens of the Commonwealth or Empire of Youth. This is the only empire to which we can owe allegiance, for that is the forerunner of the future federation of the world.**

# CHAPTER XII

## Dominion Status or Independence ?

**[Should India have Dominion Status or Complete Independence ? This is the vital problem before the country. Lord Wavell announced that the Elections would decide the issue. It is interesting to note the views of Pandit Nehru, the sanest Indian statesman. The following is the full text of the speech delivered on Wednesday, the 29th of August, 1928, at the All-Parties Conference at Lucknow on Pandit Malaviya's resolution dealing with Dominion Status for India.]**

The members of the Committee, whose report we are considering, have been good enough to commend a little bit of drudgery that I performed for them. It is a little ungracious of me to criticize their work, especially as, perhaps, I know more than any one else how hard they worked on this report.

Why was the Committee appointed ? We all know that it was appointed principally to find a solution for our communal difficulties. We were faced at Bombay by an impasse and no way out was visible then. Therefore this Committee was appointed and not so much because it was necessary to draft a fine constitution. Their report testifies to the measure of sucess that they have attained in finding this solution.

It is fair solution, just to all parties, and I earnestly trust that the conference will accept it.

Some of the other proposals that the Committee has made are to my thinking not so happy. *I am specially unable*

*to reconcile myself to Dominion Status and all its implications* What is the meaning of the resolution that we are considering? The preamble tells us that it is open to us to carry on activity and propaganda for independence. But this is a mere flourish, meaning little. The second part of the resolution really commits every organisation and every individual for it to Dominion Status. The speeches in support of the motion, and specially that of the mover, made this even clearer. I wondered when I was listening to them, whether I was not attending a session of the Congress a generation ago. They embody an ideology of a past age utterly out of touch with facts and realities to-day. We were told of the injustice in not having Indian governors, Indians in the Service and in the Railway Board. Is this what we have met here for? Is this our idea of freedom? It seems to me that we are drifting back from the 20th century to the ways and methods of the 19th.

We are told that we must be practical, and being practical is taken to mean adherence to an outworn set of ideas, regardless of the changes that have happened in the world. The mover of resolution told us that he had learnt his politics from John Stuart Mill and Green, the author of *The Short History of the Indian People*. Eminent men they were, but may I remind him that they are dead and gone and much has happened since then? They are dead as Queen Anne, as Charles I, as Louis XVI of France and as last Tzar of Russia. **The world has moved and changed, and if we are to be practical let us take stock of the changes that the world has brought. What does the British Commonwealth of Nations, as it is now called, stand for? It stands for one part domineering over and exploiting the other.** There are England and the self-governing dominions, exploiting India, parts of Africa, Malaya and other parts of the world. When we obtain Dominion Status, are we going to get promotion from the exploited part to that of the exploiting? Are we going to assist England and the other Dominions in exploiting Egypt and Africa? The thing is inevitable. Dominion Status for India must necessarily mean the break-up of the British Empire as it is to-day.

*Then again we are told that Dominion Status may be obtained by consent. Independence only after an appeal to arms or force. I do not know if any one here imagines that Dominion Status is going to be achieved by sweet reasonableness and logic. If so, all I can say is that he is a very credulous individual. Dominion Status or Inde-*

*pendence, both requirc a sanction behind them, whether that is the sanction of armed force cr non-violent jorce.* You will get Dominion Status the moment you make it clear to the British people that unless it is granted they will stand to lose much more. You will get it when they feel that it will be hell for them in India unless they agreed to it. You will not get it by logic or fine phrases. In matters of this kind justice and have little place. Therefore both for Independence and Dominion Status, a sanction and a force of some kind is necessary. Consent only follows the creation of the sanction. It cannot come without it. Alternatively if Dominion Status can be the result of an agreement between India and England, I see no reason why Independence also should not be agreed to between them. We may agree to certain safeguards, if necesssary, for British interests, not because we consider that the British are entitled to any safeguards, but as the price of peace in order to avoid bloody warfare and great suffering. Perhaps, it is easier for me to co-operate with the British people than it is for many of those who talk of Dominion Status, but I cannot co-operate on their terms. I shall co-operate with them on equal terms only when I have some sanction and force behind me.

I am, therefore, interested much more in the creation of this sanction than a fine constitution. Do it by all means, but remember that in order to enforce it you must have a sanction and that applies both to Dominion Status and Independence. Do not be under any delusion that Dominion Status is a matter of consent and easily obtainable and that Independence is much more difficult of attainment and can come only through war. **If India gets Dominion Status, it necessarily follows that we fit our foreign policy with the foreign policy of England, that we support England in Egypt, China and elsewhere.** Indeed the report makes it clear that there should be a joint imperial policy. Are you prepared to be tied to the chariot wheels of England in this way ? Dominion Status involves co-operation between India and England.

Let us consider the various groups in England to-day Are you going to co-operate with my Lords Birkenhead and Winterton or with Mr. Lloyd George of the 'Steel frame' fame, and his great supporter in the press, *the Manchester Guardian*, which has called this report, that we are considering a piece of lunacy ? Or will you co-operate with the valient

Jix, the Home-Secretary in England, who among his merits—and they are few—has certainly the quality of frankness, who stated that the English people had come to India, not for the benefit of India, but to fill their own pockets ? Or will you co-operate with the sanctimonious and canting humbugs who lead the Labour Party in England ? For my part, I would prefer to deal with the Birkenhead crowd than with Macdonald and Co. Whom, then, do you co-operate with in England ? Nobody will have you, nobody will deal with you, but still you go on repeating the worn out formula of making offers and compromises and convincing the British people. You will never do so till you develope the sanction and enforce your will. Therefore, I say to you with all humility that to talk of Dominion Status is to delude ourselves and to give the country an entirely wrong lead. The only practical goal is that of independence, and it is bad policy and worse tactic to agree in any shape or form to Dominion Status, even for a while and even as a compr omise.

There is talk of funity amongst various parties and undoubtedly the gathering here is a very representative gathering. But I would beg of you to remember that we represent largely the intelligentia of this country only. We represent directly at aay rate, the two or three or five per cent. in this country only. The whole country, as we all know, has been convulsed this year by labour troubles. Strikes, lock-outs, and shootings and the terrible misery involved in all these and the peasant troubles have taken place in different parts of the country. Yet what do you find in the report in regard to these matters ? There is hardly anything except a few good principles in the Declaration of Rights and elsewhere. Only a few days ago the Government produced a measure, the Trade Disputes Bill, which is intended to stifle and prevent labour organization. What have we to say in regard to it ? Still more recently a new measure has been produced to deal, it is said, with Bolshevik agitators in the country. He must be a simple enough person who imagines that a few Bolsheviks and the like or even hundreds of them can create all this labour trouble and peasant trouble in India. This measure is meant to apply to non-Indians. But we all know that there are enough measures in the Statute Book, like the Bengal Ordinance which can be made to apply to Indians. There is no necessity for any further enactments to Indians. This has been and is the consistent policy of England towards India.

Do you think it is right for us to claim Dominion Status and to put our seal in a way to this policy ?

I do not submit that it would be a wrong thing and a fatal thing for India to make Dominion Status as our objective. Those of us who think with me have carefully considered this resolution and we have definitely come to the conclusion that we cannot support it. We do not desire, however, to hamper the work of this conference, because we feel that the principal work it has before it is the settlement of the communal issue. We are prepared to help in so far as we can in the settlement of this problem. We have, therefore, decided to dissociate ourselves entirely with this resolution and not to have anything to do with it by way of amendment or otherwise. If you will permit me, sir, I shall read out the statement which I have already placed in your hands on behalf of a number of members of this conference. The statement runs as follows :—

" We the signatories of this statement are of opinion that the constitution of India should only be based on full independence. We feel that the resolution that has been placed before the All-Parties Conference definitely commits those who support it to a constitution based on what is termed Dominion Status. We are not prepared to accept this and we, therefore, cannot accept or support this resolution. We recognise that the preamble to the resolution gives us the right to carry on activity in favour of Independence, but this preamble does not in any way lessen the commitment contained in the second part of the resolution. We have decided, however, not to obstruct or hamper the work of this conference but we desire to record our considered opinion on this question and associate ourselves with this particular resolution in so far as it commits us to the acceptance of Dominion Status. We shall not take any part in this resolution by moving amendments or by voting on it. **We propose to carry on such activity as we consider proper and necessary in favour of Complete Independence.**"

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## CHAPTER XIII

# Sunrise of Socialism

**[Independence is not enough, says Nehru. We must have economic security for the peasantry. For them freedom means food and liberty has no meaning without loaves. This is the substance of the presidential address of Jawaharlal delivered at the U. P. Conference held at Jhansi on October 27, 1928. The speech is surcharged with deep patriotice motions, because the city of Jhansi reminded Pandit Nehru of the Rani of Jhansi who fell fighting in the Indian Revolution of 1857, that "chip of a girl" who knew no fear and went out to struggle against overwhelming odds for "the glory of India and her womanhood"!]**

For a second time you have done me the honour of making me President of this Provincial Conference. Grateful as I am, I fully realise that I am here to-day in place of another whom you had wisely chosen and than whom you could have had no better to guide your deliberations here and your activities in the coming year. But to our misfortune, domestic troubles have prevented your chosen President from taking his rightful place in the chair here to-day and the burden of his work has fallen on me. That burden I shall endeavour to discharge here at this conference but you will surely join with me in the hope that in the course of the year our valiant and great-hearted comrade will take his rightful place at the head of the Congress organisation in this province.

Five years ago you chose me President and I ventured to say to you then that the only possible ideal we could work for was the ideal of Complete Independence. Our Conference adopted this ideal and recommended to the National Congress

likewise. It is well to remember this in these days of argument and debate about Independence and Dominion Status. *The cry of independence is no new cry in India. From the day that our country fell under an alien rule, there have always been people who have dreamed of independence struggle and worked for it and sacrificed their all for it. What was the great struggle of 1857 but a war of independence consecrated by many gallant deeds and heroic sacrifices and also darkened by misdeeds which brought failure in their train. Here in this city of Jhansi the mind dwells lovingly on that chip of a girl who knowing no fear, went out to struggle and die against overwhelming odds for the glory of India and her womanhood.*

As generation has succeeded generation, there has been no lack of men and women who have refused to bow their heads and bend their knees before the alien ruler. For that disobedience they paid a very heavy price, but the gallant stream went on and increased in volume. Memories are short and we are apt to forget the deeds of the past. But even the present generation in which we live has been full enough of golden and inspiring deeds. Were the youngmen and old, who faced death and long imprisonment, thinking of the mirage of Dominion Status or of full-blooded freedom ?

**No living nation under alien rule can ever be at peace with its conqueror. For peace means submission and submission means the death of all that is vital in the nation. And India has shown her vitality by the endless sacrifices her sons and daughters have made to free her from alien rule. India cannot be at peace with England till she has attained her freedom.** That is the psychological, the fundamental reason for our desiring and working for independence. This freedom cannot come by our becoming partners, even if that were possible, of that imperialist concern which is called the British Empire, and we have realised, or ought to realise that imperialism and freedom are poles apart. The day England sheds her imperialism, we shall gladly co-operate with her. But do you see any signs of it ? Or are you simple enough to imagine that we can reform her from within by first entering her Empire or Commonwealth ? England to-day is the arch-priest of imperialism and perhaps the worst offenders are those of her Labour Party who have the remarkable capacity for combining tall talk about freedom and self-determination with full-blooded imperialism.

**It is not England that is our enemy. It is imperialism and where imperialism is, there we cannot willingly remain.**

But you do not require arguments from me in favour of independence. You have been the leaders in this movement inside the Congress organisation and you may well take pride in the fact that the lead you gave has been followed by the Congress itself.

We have so far laid stress on political independence. It is now time for you to take the lead again and declare what you mean by independence. We are told by some people that the Congress must not concern itself with matters other than political. But life cannot be divided up into compartments, nor indeed can politics itself ignore the other functions of society. The problem before us is to build a free society and to do that you must consider and seek to change social and economic conditions. What manner of independence is it which results in starvation for many and the exploitation of millions? Independence must necessarily involve freedom from all exploitation and to bring this about you must attack everything in your society which helps the exploiter. That is also a powerful reason why we cannot be satisfied with Dominion Status, for that is bound to result in giving a dominant position to foreign capital and foreign capital means foreign exploitation.

**The problem before us is therefore two-fold, firstly to chalk out an economic and social programme which will provide freedom for the masses and then to indicate the manner of creating sanctions to enforce our programme.**

But before we consider programme let us be clear about our aims and our general outlook. Most of us talk about serving the masses and relieving their poverty, although we seldom have any but the vaguest of notions as to how to do it. We imagine that with the coming of *Swaraj*, the masses are bound to benefit. This is partly true no doubt, but it is by no means certain that they will do so. Our very method of referring to the masses betrays that we think ourselves something apart from them. By virtue of our intellects or our material possessions we consider ourselves the natural leaders of the masses. It is "we" and the "masses" and if any conflict arises between the two we naturally attach more importance to our own interests. We are convinced that we are the chosen of the land and on our worthy shoulders has fallen the burden of freeing this country and incidentally of bettering our own position.

This is the way we think consciously or unconsciously.

It is the way of hypocrisy. Let us not talk of serving the masses when our principal object is to serve our own class. Therefore in drawing up programmes we must keep the interests of the masses uppermost and sacrifice everything else to them. For it is the masses who really are the nation. On their prosperity depends the prosperity of the country. Not only it is just that our programme must keep the interests of the masses uppermost, but it is highly necessary and expedient from other points of views also. Only thus can we raise the sanction which can enforce their will. But to give effect to that programme we shall have to subordinate ourselves and give the predominant place in our movement to the representatives of the masses. Thus only can we make it a real mass movement. Only those who are themselves interested in an economic change can effectively bring it about. The leadership and effective control of the movement must therefore ultimately pass to those who are most exploited to-day. They will stumble and fall and make many mistakes but they will have the driving force of economic necessity behind them and this is bound to carry them to victory. Bereft of this driving force, our politics are bound to become as they have, indeed, become a jumble of resolutions and processions and shouting with no action behind them. *Swaraj* will not be obtained by scoring lawyer's points or by forensic eloquence.

*I have repeatedly stated that to my thinking the only solution for our many ills is socialism. Socialism therefore must be our aim. Some of you may perhaps think, not without reason, that we cannot reach it at one bound and it is necessary to have a lesser immediate programme. It is not easy to draw up this programme at a conference and I would earnestly recommend that this conference should appoint a committee to do it. I shall merely indicate here some important matters which should be considered for inclusion in the conference.*

Our social programme must lay down clearly that we cannot tolerate the many disabilities which various classes, called the depressed classes, suffer from. We must do away with these distinctions and try to give full opportunities of growth to every one. Special provision must be made for freeing our women-folk from the many burdens and disabilities they suffer from, both legally and otherwise. They should have the same status as men, such relics of barbarism as *purdah* must of course go entirely.

**Our economic programme must aim at the removal of all economic inequalities and an equitable distribution of**

weatlh. For the moment we may take the provision of a living wage for a worker and protection from the economic consequences of old age, maternity, etc., as provided for in the All-Parties Fundamental Rights, as the basis of our programme. How will the provision be made ? Surely not by keeping the economic and social structure of to-day. To give to the pcor and depressed, you must take from the rich and those who possess. We have, therefore, to equalise as far as possible the present distinction of wealth and at the same time to see that the principal of taxation is such as to prevent both great wealth and great poverty. That is to say that the burden of taxation must be increased on the rich and decreased and even removed entirely from the poor.

We in this province have to face especially the zamindar and *kisan* problem. To our misfortune we have zamindars everywhere and they have prevented all healthy growth. Compare our province to other provinces like the Punjab and Gujrat, where there are peasant-holdings. We have indeed in this province produced in the past and have to-day great men who do honour to the country. But we have hardly a middle class ; we specialise in extremes of wealth and poverty. We must therefore face this problem of landlordism, and if we face it, what can we do with it except to abolish it ? There is no half-way house. It is a feudal relic of the past utterly out of keeping with modern conditions.

*The abolition of landlordism must therefore occupy a prominent place in our programme and instead of that we should have small holdings ordinarily enough for a family to cultivate. But in order to prevent accumulations, we must prohibit all alienations of land and all transfers for debt.*

How are we to abolish the big estates ? Some advocate confiscation and others full compensation. The latter is on the face of it impossible as we cannot find the enormous amount of money for it. And if we could find the money the burden on the land will continue and the peasant holder will certainly not profit by the change. The only person who will profit will be the zamindar who will be saved all trouble and worry and will get hard cash instead of a varying and troublesome income. Besides, there is no attempt at equalisation of wealth if full compensation is given. The example of other countries shows us that full compensation for land has brought no relief or solution of the problem. In no event therefore can we give full compensation.

Confiscation, on the other hand, though equitably perfectly justifiable, may lead to many cases of hardships. I would suggest therefore that some compensation might be given specially in cases of hardships. But compensation should certainly not be given so as to make the receiver of it a wealthy man again.

I would also suggest that the very poor holders of land, who can merely make a living out of it, should be entirely exempted from taxation.

Another problem that we have to face is the indebtedness of the peasantry. These debts must be subject to partial compensation in cases of hardships.

Taxation should be direct and as far as possible indirect taxation should be abolished. Further, this direct taxation should be steeply graduated so as to fall mainly on the larger incomes.

A tax which we have not got in India, though many other countries including England have got it, is an inheritance tax or death duties. This is an eminently just and social tax and should be introduced in India and steeply graduated so as to prevent large inheritance.

India has become sufficiently industrialised for us to pay special attention to the condition of the workers in the factories. Indeed, the history of the past few months with its strikes and lock-outs and shootings is such that no one can ignore industrial labour. Government does not ignore them. They realise far more than do most of our leaders the potential strength of the workers and so with frantic haste they have sought to muzzle and tie up Trade Unions. They are not troubled to act in this way with our conferences and the like for they know well that our chief industry is talk, specially that of lawyers is a harmless commodity. The real danger to Government comes from the peasantry and the workers and the industrial workers being more capable of organised action must inevitably take the lead in mass action. We see, therefore, the attempts of Government to crush their organisation and prevent organised action. Wherever there is industrial trouble the whole strength of Government is always on the side of the big employer, and in addition to having to put up with starvation wages and miserable housing conditions, the workers have to face the bullets of the Government soldiers and police. But even this repression was not considered enough and we

have had the Trades Disputes Bill and the Public Safety Bill. The British Government has done and will do everything in its power to prevent workers organising themselves. Are you going to take a neutral attitude in the matter and allow the workers to be crushed? Go to Cawnpore and see the terrible conditions of the workers and the houses they live in. Go to the jute regions of Bengal and compare the million of profit made by British capitalists with the miserable workers.

**Ordinary humanity must induce you to side with the workers. Political prudence will point the same way, for the workers are the most dynamic factor in our society to-day and if we ignore them we shall find ourselves ignored and put by on a shelf.**

Therefore we must deliberately help the workers to organise themselves and by workers I do not merely refer to those who do manual labour but all who work by their muscles or their brains. First of all, we have to combat the measures of government which hamper the growth of the workers. We must help trade-unions and try to develope factory committees to safeguard the rights of the workers. Our immediate programme must be the enforcement of the 8-hour day and the 44-hour week and the fullest provisions for compensation, insurance and the like. For women and children special provisions must be made, regarding hours of work, the kind of work which is suitable for them and maternity provisions. Healthy and sanitary housing accommodation must be provided by the employers for every employee and a minimum living wage must be fixed. These suggestions are not revolutionary. Even from the capitalist point of view they are recognised to be essential in order to increase the efficiency of labour.

These are only some odd suggestions for you to consider. Many others will suggest themselves to you. *My present object is to impress you that we can no longer make any progress by the cry of Swaraj only. We must make it clear that we aim at economic and social Swaraj as well as political and for this purpose we must lay down a definite economic and social programme.* Only thus can you bring your movement for freedom in touch with reality and make it a dynamic and irresistible force. This is also the surest way of killing communalism.

Communalism cannot go by pious resolutions or endless talks of unity. If you will examine it, you will find that in essence it is the desire amongst intellectuals for the loaves and fish of office. It has nothing to do with the masses but the

masses are deluded and misled and made to forget their real troubles. If you direct their attentions to economic facts which matter, you will automatically turn them away from communalism and the pseudo-religious mentality.

We have the curious fact to-day that some of our prominent politicians talk fondly of independence and yet claim all manner of communal rights and privileges. We are told repeatedly that the heart of the community on that is sound. I have no doubt that the heart of every community is sound, but this strange mixture of communalism and independence makes me doubt if the heads of those who combine the two are sound. For there is nothing in common between these two and you cannot build up the noble edifice of a free India on the shifting and sandy foundations of communalism. The All-Parties Conference has made a number of suggestions on the communal issue. These do not put an end to all communalism but they go a very long way in that direction and should, therefore, be cordially welcomed. Under the circumstances I believe they are the best solution of this problem and I trust this conference will fully endorse them and work for them.

Having defined our ideal, how are we going to achieve it? Every one says that we must have sanctions, but I have noticed a tendency in some of us to believe that if we shout together and shout long enough and do nothing else we shall succeed. Apparently they believe that the British dominion in India will suddenly give way like that the walls of Jericho, if the noise we make is loud enough. That is I think the basis of the cry for Dominion Status and that is another reason why I consider Dominion Status as an ideal to lead away from the right path. It makes us think that sanctions are not necessary and that is a dangerous thought. Even a child in politics knows that without strength behind a demand that demand is worthless.

We have, therefore, to devise sanctions. I have already hinted these sanctions can only come from mass organisation and mass action. The nature of that action must be determined at the particular moment but in principle it must be some kind of non-co-operation. We may not perhaps adopt all the items of the non-co-operation programme of 1921 but we must adopt the spirit of it leading to non-payment of taxes or other forms of mass civil disobedience.

*It may be that we may be called upon to help England with our men and treasure in an imperialist war. The Congress has already given us a lead for this and we must watch with vigilance that we are not exploited again as we were in 1914.*

India is not so weak as many people imagine. Our weakness is merely due to our own faint hearts and specially our fear of the masses. If we once get into touch with the masses and work with them, and for them, our strength will become enormous. World forces help us and even India, weak as she is, can make a difference in a crisis.

I have not referred so far to the Simon Commission, for so far as that is concerned I would be speaking to the converted. You will of course have nothing to do with it. That is only an example of the mentality of England and shows us how she wants to treat us. She will have no co-operation with us and she is only there to enforce her will. Why then should we waste our energy in evolving schemes of co-operation with her? Let us develop strength and ultimately the strong will prevail.

The report of the Nehru Committee and the decisions of the All-Parties Conference have been discussed threadbare and only a few days ago I had occasion at another provincial conference to deal with them at length. I have already referred to some parts of it, notably the communal recommendations. For the rest although, I disagree with some recommendations, I am prepared to commend it generally subject to the qualification of independence. I recognise fully the value of the report and do not wish by petty criticism to lessen it.

**One thing more I refer to and that is the question of the Indian States. We have had recently a very illuminatory address by the Maharaja of Bikaner. Among various revealing statements he has made, perhaps the most revealing is his clear declaration that in case of a future war between India and England, he will whole-heartedly support England against his own country. I do not think you will require any comment from me on this amazing declaration.** If the Maharaja had lived in England or France or Germany or the United States or indeed any other country and had made such a declaration, what kind of reception do you think would it have had? The Maharaja is perhaps living mentally in the middle ages and still thinks of the divine right of kings and imagines like the French king of old *L'etal c'est*

*moi*. But the king who said this is long departed and a republic exists in his country, and in England the king is but a figure-head without the least power. It would be well for our princes and chieftains to remember that the days of kings and princes are past. This leads us to another conclusion. In drawing up programme of work we must see what classes and groups in the country stand to gain special privileges by the freedom of India and what stand to lose them. Let us be quite clear in our minds about this and having made this distinction let us draw up a programme for the former group. The latter can never be a help to us and in a moment of crisis may turn against us and do us great injury. An attempt to satisfy them and include them our programme is imprudent not only on equitable grounds but also from the point of view of expediency.

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## CHAPTER XIV

# Can India Defend Herself ?

**[Can India defend herself in case British Government decides to quit India ? Yes—says Jawaharlal. This is the substance of the presidential address delivered at the Kerala Provincial Conference held at Payyanur on 28th May 1928. If Indian soldiers can defend the British Empire in different theatres of the world as mercenaries, they can certainly defend their homeland as soldiers of liberty, better-trained and better-organized, under patriotic generals.]**

India has little in common with England and her economic interests conflict in almost every particular with those of England. An imperial bond between the two can only be an enforced union productive of ill-will and continuous friction and must of necessity be to the advantage of England.

**For the present, however, the union must necessarily be the union of the lion and lamb with the lamb inside the lion.** This is evident if we study the relation of England with other countries like China, Persia, Mesopotamia and Egypt. She has opposed all attempts at freedom of these countries and only recently we had an amazing example of her imperial policy in Independent Egypt. Even in regard to the countries of Europe, she is acknowledged to be the main obstacle to world-peace and co-operation. It is inconceivable, therefore, that India can have a real measure of freedom within the limits of the British Empire and you will wellcome, I am sure, the resolution of the Madras Congress laying down our goal as complete national independence. This does not mean the ill-will to England or to any other country, but it is a condition precedent to our future growth and to the development of peaceful relations with other countries including England. The Madras Congress resolution is important specially because it attacks the psychology of submission and slavery

and helplessness, which generations of foreing rule have developed in us. It prepares our minds for the will to be free without which freedom cannot come even to-day. There are so many of us who take an academic interest in Indian freedom, who whilst they talk of freedom feel no inner urge for it. Doubts and difficulties assail them and fear born of a slave psychology hampers their efforts. We are told of the dangers that India may have to face in the event of England leaving us to our own resources, of the fear of foreign invasion and of our inability to cope with it. But it is not realised that the strength that succeeds in enforcing India's will on England also succeed in protecting India from other foreign incursions. *It is not felt keenly enough that we are even now suffering under a foreign invasion and the future cannot bring any greater disaster to us. Not to get rid of our present domination because of future problematical dangers is the height of fear and weakness. But what external dangers will face us when the British leave India ? We have an Indian army brave and efficient, well-tried in many continents. It is good enough to fight for the freedom of the Allies in the battle-fields of Europe and it will be good enongh to fight if necessary for the freedom of India. When freedom comes we shall develope our army and strengthen it and make it more efficient than it is to-day.*

The strength of the country not only deperds on the international situation and the balance of power. Poland, Lithuania, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungry, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Jugoslavia, Portugal, Bulgaria, Roumania and many other countries are independent, but not one of them can withstand one great Power. Even the great Powers cannot separately cope with a combination against them ; but they remain independent because none dare attack them for fear of complications. The other country could not tolerate that the rich prize of India should fall again to another Power. But what power could indeed threaten us ? France, Germany and Italy are too much involved in their mutual hatred and jealousies and are too afraid of each other to trouble us at all. The United States of America are too far away for effective action. Japan has to face hostility of the United States and even of the Western European Powers and cannot dare embark on a new adventure, which would be fraught with the greatest risks for her. Afghanistan is strong in defence but weak in attack and it is inconceivable that with its limited resources it can do us any harm. It may at most carry out a number of successful raids before we can defeat it and hold it in check. But there is absolutely no reason why we should have any

such relations with Afghanistan. Russia remains the sole danger but even this danger is largely imaginary, as every one knows or ought to know, that no country is in greater need of peace than Russia. The Great War, the civil war, the famine and the blockade have shaken her foundations and done her tremendous injury. She has made much good of her losses but above everything else she desires peace to build up the new social order she has established. Experts tell us that although strong in defence she is weak in attack. Her whole government is based on the good-will of the workers and the peasantry and she cannot count on this good-will in an oppressive campaign. She has so many enemies that she dare not of her own accord start an invasion of India and leave her western flanks exposed to attack. Nor has she any economic reason to covet India. *India and Russia are too alike to help each other much. Both are largely agricultural countries with raw materials and markets. She wants capital and machinery and India can supply neither. We thus see that no danger threatens India from any direction and even if there is any danger we shall be able to cope with it.*

It may be, however, that we are unable to cope with it and go down in the struggle. That risk must be faced as it has been faced by every brave people in history. Because of risk, we cannot give up our birthright or take the shameful position of asking for the British help to defend our country and liberty. We must make it clear that on no account are we prepared to have the British forces in our country. The alien army of occupation must be withdrawn.

It is said that by laying stress on Independence, we antagonise other parties in the country just when the need for the unity was the greatest. Unity is certainly most desirable, but can unity be achieved by the sacrifice of our principles ? Our opponents and even those of our colleagues for whose sake we sacrifice our principles will respect us the less for it. Let us respect even sentiments and the prejudices of others. But let us not give in on any matter which we consider vital. The Congress has already shown its desire to co-operate whenever it can with our groups and parties without giving up our ideals and our goal. We have co-operated whole-heartedly with others for the boycott of the Simon Commission and are to-day co-operating with numerous groups in the All-Parties Conference. **We could give no greater evidence of our goodwill, and our tolerance cannot extend to sacrifice of the principle and the goal ; and the ideal we have set before us is too vivid to be forgotten or discarded**

**for a temporary compromise. We have to travel the road together respecting each other and it may be that when we reach the cross-roads we may have converted many others to our view. If we fail to do so, we would agree to differ and part company without rancour or ill-will.**

You must have been disappointed at the proceedings of the All-Parties Conference in Bombay and yet the very fact that we are having so much difficulty in finding a solution to contending claims shows that we are at grips with the real problem. By ignoring them or making a patch-work compromise we cannot solve them. It is a measure of our earnestness that we are trying to face them squarely, and I have every hope that if we continue to do so, we shall find a solution.

What are these problems we hear of controversies about the separation of Sind and separate and joint electorates and reservation of seats ? If you go to the bottom of all this, you find one all-pervading cause. It is fear of the Muslim that the Hindu may exterminate him, the fear of the Hindu that the Muslim may crush him, the fear of each community or groups. It is a senseless fear. To protect itself, each community wants a privileged and dominating position in each province. Surely no group should dominate over another and the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League each desire domination and there can be no compromise between the two. Are we then to give up the task as hopeless ? The duty of the Congress and of all other organisations which are not based on pure communalism is clear. After paying due regard to the fears, whether justified or not, they must evolve a constitution which should be as just and reasonable as can be expected under the circumstances and then should place it before the country. And the country as a whole, I feel sure, will accept it if it is based on reason and justice.

*Unhappily it is not possible in this world of ours to-day to produce an ideal constitution. We cannot ignore prejudice and unreason, but let us at any rate try to approximate to the ideal as far as we can. The history of India tells us that danger has always come because of the want of central authority. We have too much decentralisation. If we are to build up a strong India we must have a strong Central Government but at the same time we cannot afford to kill the rich and varying cultures of India by having too much uniformity and discouraging local effort and enterprise. In other countries the tendency to-day is to give full local autonomy to cultural areas. We must, therefore, while laying stress on a strong Central Government, accept the*

*principle of giving considerable autonomy to different areas having traditions and cultures of their own. The best test of a culture is that of language. There may be too many small autonomous areas.* The economic life of the country may suffer; but this can be safeguarded by giving up powers to large areas including several autonomous cultural areas. If this principle is kept in mind and if in addition we have joint electorates and proper safeguards for all the minorities and backward groups, I think we might evolve a satisfactory constitution for a period at least. Let us hope that committee which the All-Parties Conference has appointed will meet with success in drawing up this constitution. It is becoming clear that the Indian States cannot be ignored or excluded. Nothing can be more fatal for India than a division between the two independent entities. The problem has become an urgent one because we find that efforts are being made to raise a barrier between the two parts of India. Recently a scheme has been published on behalf of a number of Indian princes under a superficial garb of good-will to British India. This scheme lays down the dangerous principle of separation of Indian States and so far as the people of the States are concerned, we are told, they will live under a rule of law. We know well what rule of law and order means. This scheme must, therefore, be combated by us not only in British India but in the States. Even such of the ruling princes as are wise and foreseeing enough should reject it and take their stand by their own people and by the people of British India. We stand together and nothing must be allowed to separate us.

## CHAPTER XV

# Challenge to Imperialism

**[The Indian National Congress, under Jawaharlal, passed the Resolution of Complete Independence at the historic session of the Congress at Lahore in 1930. The fight for freedom is in operation for the last fifteen years. Consequently the foundations of freedom and the programme for independence, which Pandit Nehru laid down in his presidential address, are as true to-day as they were at that time. There is a prophetic glory about the utterances of Jawaharlal, and the weapons of freedom which he forged in 1930 are more essential, more handy and sharper than ever. All those who are anxious to serve their motherland, we draw their attention to the hints for freedom formulated by Jawaharlal in the following speech] :—**

For four-and-forty years this National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India. During this period it has somewhat slowly but surely awakened national consciousness from its long stupor and built up the national movement. If to-day we are gathered here at a crisis of our destiny, conscious of our strength as well as of our weakness, and looking with hope and apprehension to the future, it is well that we give first thought to those who spent their lives with little hope of reward so that those that follow them may have the joy of achievement. **Many of the giants of old are not with us and we of a later day, standing on an eminence of their creation, may often decry their efforts. That is the way of the world. But none of you can forget them or the great work they did in laying the foundations of a free India.** And none of us

can ever forget that glorious band of men and women who, without reckoning the consequences, have laid down their young lives or spent their bright youth in suffering and torment in utter protest against a foreign domination. Many of their names even are not known to us. They laboured and suffered in silence without any expectation of public applause, and by their heart's blood they nursed the tender plant of India's freedom. While many of us temporized and compromised, they stood up and proclaimed a people's right to freedom and declared to the world that India, even in her degradation, had the spark of life in her, because she refused to submit to tyranny and serfdom. Brick by brick has our national movement been built up, and often on the prostrate bodies of her martyred sons has India advanced. The giants of old may not be with us, but the courage of old is with us still, and India can yet produce martyrs like Jatindas and Wizaya.

This is the glorious legacy that we have inherited, and you wish to put me in charge of it. I know well that I occupy this honoured place by chance more than by your deliberate design. Your desire was to choose another—one who towers above all others in this present-day world of ours—and there could have been no wiser choice. But fate and he conspired together and thrust me against your will and mine into this terrible seat of responsibility. Should I express my gratitude to you for having placed me in this dilemma? But I am grateful indeed for your confidence in one who strangely lacks it himself.

You will discuss many vital national problems that face us to-day, and your decisions may change the course of Indian history. But you are not the only people that are faced with problems. **The whole world to-day is one vast question mark, and every country and every people is in the melting-pot.** The age of faith, with the comfort and stability it brings, is past, and there is questioning about everything, however permanent or sacred it might have appeared to our forefathers. Everywhere there is doubt and restlessness, and the foundations of the State and society are in process of transformation. Old-established ideas of liberty, justice, property and even the family are being attacked, and the outcome hangs in the balance. We appear to be in a dissolving period of history, when the world is in labour and, out of her travail, will give birth to a new order.

No one can say what the future will bring, but we may assert with some confidence that Asia, and even India, will

play a determining part in future world policy. The brief day of European domination is already approaching its end. Europe has ceased to be the centre of activity and interest. The future lies with America and Asia. Owing to false and incomplete history many of us have been led to think that Europe has always dominated over the rest of the world, and Asia has always let the legions of the West thunder past and has plunged in thought again. We have forgotten that it was India that finally broke the military power of Alexander. Thought has undoubtedly been the glory of Asia and specially of India, but in the field of action the record of Asia has been equally great. But none of us desires that the legions of Asia or Europe should overrun the continents again. We have all had enough of them.

*India to-day is a part of a world movement. Not only China, Turkey, Persia and Egypt, but also Russia and the countries of the West are taking part in this movement, and India cannot isolate herself from it. We have our own problems, difficult and intricate, and we cannot run away from them and take shelter in the wider problems that affect the world. But if we ignore the world we do so at our peril. Civilization to-day, such as it is, is not the creation or the monopoly of one people or nation. It is a composite fabric to which all countries have contributed and then have adopted to suit their particular needs. And if India has a message to give to the world, as I hope she has, she has also to receive and learn much from the messages of other peoples.*

When everything is changing it is well to remember the long course of Indian history. Few things in history are more amazing than the wonderful stability of the social structure in India which withstood the impact of numerous alien influences and thousands of years of change and conflict. It withstood them because it always sought to absorb them and tolerate them. Its aim was not to exterminate but to establish an equilibrium between different cultures. Aryans and non-Aryans settled down together recognizing each other's right to their culture, and outsiders who came, like the Parsis, found a welcome and a place in the social order. With the coming of the Muslims the equilibrium was disturbed, but India sought to restore it, and largely succeeded. Unhappily for us before we could adjust our differences, the political structure broke down, the British came and we fell.

**Great as was the success of India in evolving a stable society she failed in a vital particular, and because she failed in this, she fell and remains fallen. No solution was**

**found for the problem of equality. India deliberately ignored this and built up her social structure on inequality, and we have the tragic consequences of this policy in the millions of our people who till yesterday were suppressed and had little opportunity for growth.**

When Europe fought her wars of religion and Christians massacred each other in the name of their Saviour, India was tolerant, although, alas, there is little of this toleration to-day. Having attained some measure of religious liberty, Europe sought after political liberty and political and legal equality. Having attained these also, she finds that they mean very little without economic liberty and equality. And so to-day politics have ceased to have much meaning, and the most vital question is that of social and economic equality.

India also will have to find a solution to this problem, and until she does so, her political and social structure cannot have stability. That solution need not necessarily follow the example of any other country. It must, if it has to endure, be based on the genius of her people and be an outcome of her thought and culture. And when it is found, the unhappy differences between various communities, which trouble us to-day and keep back our freedom, will automatically disappear.

Indeed the real differences have already largely gone, but fear of each other and distrust and suspicion remain and sow seeds of discord. **The problem before us is not one of removing differences. They can well remain side by side and enrich our many-sided culture. The problem is how to remove fear and suspicion, and, being intangible, they are hard to get at.** An earnest attempt was made to do so last year by the All-Parties Committee, and much progress was made towards the goal. But we must admit with sorrow that success has not wholly crowned its efforts. Many of our Muslim and Sikh friends have strenuously opposed the solutions suggested, and passions have been roused over mathematical figures and percentages. *Logic and cold reason are poor weapons to fight fear and distrust. Only faith and generosity can overcome them. I can only hope that the leaders of various communities will have this faith and generosity in ample measure. What shall we gain for ourselves or for our community if all of us are slaves in a slave country? And what can we lose if once we remove the shackles from India and can breathe the air of freedom again?* Do we want outsiders, who are not of us and who have kept us in bondage, to be the protectors of our little rights and privileges, when

they deny us the very right to freedom? No majority can crush a determined minority, and no minority can be sufficiently protected by a little addition to its seats in Legislature. Let us remember that in a world to-day almost everywhere, a very small minority holds wealth and power and dominates over the great majority.

*I have no love for bigotry and dogmatism in religion, and I am glad that they are weakening. Nor do I love communalism in any shape or form. I find it difficult to appreciate why political or economic rights should depend on the membership of a religious group or community. I can fully understand the right to freedom in religion and the right to one's culture, and in India specially, which has always acknowledged and granted these rights, it should be no difficult matter to ensure their continuance. We have only to find out some way whereby we may root out the fear and distrust that darken our horizon to-day. The politics of a subject race are largely based on fear and hatred, we have been too long under subjection to get rid of them easily.*

I was born a Hindu, but I do not know how far I am justified in calling myself one or in speaking on behalf of Hindus. But birth still counts in this country, and by right of birth I shall venture to submit to the leaders of the Hindus that it should be their privilege to take the lead in generosity. Generosity is not only good morals, but is often good politics and sound expediency. And it is inconceivable to me that in a free India the Hindus can ever be powerless. So far as I am concerned I would gladly ask our Muslim and Sikh friends to take what they will without protest or argument from me. I know that the time is coming soon when these labels and appellations will have little meaning and when our struggles will be on an economic basis. Meanwhile it matters little what our mutual arrangements are, provided only that we do not build up barriers which will come in the way of future progress.

The time has indeed already come when the All-Parties Report has to be put aside and we march forward unfettered to our goal. You will remember the resolution of the last Congress which fixed a year of grace for the adoption of the All-Parties Scheme. That year is nearly over, and the natural issue of that decision is for this Congress to declare in favour of independence and devise sanctions to achieve it.

That year has not brought Dominion Status or the All-Parties Constitution. It has brought instead suffering and

greater repression of our national and labour movements, and how many of our comrades are to-day forcibly kept away from us by the alien power. How many of them suffer exile in foreign countries and are refused facilities to return to their motherland. The army of occupation holds country in its iron grip, and the whip of the master is ever ready to come down on the best of us who dare raise their heads. The answer to the Calcutta Resolution has been clear and definite.

Recently there has been a seeming offer of peace. The Viceroy has stated on behalf of the British Government that the leaders of Indian opinion will be invited to confer with the Government on the subject of India's future constitution. The Viceroy meant well and his language was the language of peace. But even a Viceroy's goodwill and courteous phrases are poor substitutes for the hard facts that confront us. We have sufficient experience of the devious ways of British diplomacy to beware of it. The offer that the British Government made was vague, and there was no commitment or promise of performance. Only by the greatest stretch of imagination could it be interpreted as a possible response to the Calcutta Resolution. Many leaders of various political parties met together soon after and considered it. They gave it the most favourable intepretation, for they desired peace and were willing to go half-way to meet it. But in courteous language they made it clear what the vital conditions for its acceptance were. Many of us who believed in independence and were convinced that the offer was only a device to lead us astray and create division in our ranks, suffered bitter anguish and were torn with doubt. Were we justified in precipitating a terrible national struggle with all its inevitable consequences of suffering for many when there was even an outside chance of honourable peace ? With much searching of heart we signed that manifesto, and I know not to-day if we did right or wrong. Later came the explanations and amplifications in the British Parliament and elsewhere, and all doubt, if doubt there were, was removed as to the true significance of the offer. Even so your Working Committee chose to keep open the door of negotiation and left it to this Congress to take the final decision.

During the last few days there has been another discussion of this subject in the British House of Commons, and the Secretary of State for India has endeavoured to point out that successive Governments have tried to prove, not only by words,

but by deeds also, the sincerity of their faith in regard to India. We must recognize Mr. Wedgwood Benn's desire to do something for India and his anxiety to secure the goodwill of the Indian people. But his speech and the other speeches made in Parliament carry us no further. "Dominion Status in action," to which he has drawn attention, has been a snare for us, and has certainly not reduced the exploitation of India. The burdens on the Indian masses are even greater to-day because of this "Dominion Status in action" and the so-called constitutional reforms of ten years ago. High Commissioners in London, and representatives on the League of Nations, and the purchase of stores, and Indian Governors and high officials are no parts of our demand. We want to put an end to the exploitation of India's poor and to get the reality of power and not merely the livery of office.

Mr. Wedgwood Benn has given us a record of the achievements of the past decade. He could have added to it by referring to Martial Law in the Punjab and the Jallianwala Bagh shooting and the repression and exploitation that have gone on continually during this period of "Dominion Status in action." He has given us some insight into what more of Dominion Status may mean for us. It will mean the shadow of authority to a handful Indians, and more repression and exploitation of the masses.

*What will this Congress do? The conditions for co-operation remain unfulfilled. Can we co-operate so long as there is no guarantee that real freedom will come to us? Can we co-operate when our comrades lie in prison and repression continues? Can we co-operate until we are assured that real peace is sought after and not merely a tactical advantage over us? Peace cannot come at the point of the bayonet, and if we are to continue to be dominated over by an alien people, let us at least be no consenting parties to it.*

If the Calcutta Resolution holds, we have but one goal to-day, that of independence. Independence is not a happy word in the world to-day, for it means exclusiveness and isolation. Civilization has had enough of narrow nationalism and gropes towards a wider co-operation and interdependence. And if we use the word independence we do so in no sense hostile to the larger ideal. Independence for us means complete freedom from British domination and British imperialism. Having attained our freedom I have no doubt that India will welcome all attempts at world co-operation and federation, and will even agree to give up part of her own

independence to a larger group of which she is an equal member.

*The British Empire to-day is not such a group, and cannot be so long as it dominates over millions of peoples and holds large areas of the world's surface despite the will of their inhabitants. It cannot be a true commonwealth so long as imperialism is its basis and the exploitation of other races its chief means of sustenance. The British Empire to-day is indeed gradually undergoing a process of political dissolution. It is in a state of unstable equilibrium. The Union of South Africa is not a very happy member of the family, nor is the Irish Free State a willing one. Egypt drifts away. India could never be an equal member of the Commonwealth unless imperialism and all it implies is discarded. So long as this is not done, India's position in the Empire must be one of subservience, and her exploitation will continue. The embrace of the British Empire is a dangerous thing. It cannot be the life-giving embrace of affection freely given and returned. And if it is not that, it will be, what it has been in the past, the embrace of death.*

There is talk of world peace and pacts have been signed by the nations of the world. But despite pacts armaments grow and beautiful language is the only homage that is paid to the goddess of peace. Peace can only come when the causes of war are removed. So long as there is the domination of one country over another, or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always by attempts to subvert the existing order, and no stable equilibrium can endure. Out of imperialism and capitalism peace can never come. And it is because the British Empire stands for these, and bases itself on the exploitation of the masses, that we can find no willing place in it. No gain that may come to us is worth anything unless it helps in removing the grievous burdens on our masses. The weight of a great empire is heavy to carry, and long our people have endured it. Their backs are bent and down and their spirit has almost broken. How will they share in the commonwealth partnership if the burden of exploitation continues? Many of the problems we have to face are the problems of vested interests, mostly created or encouraged by the British Government. The interests of rulers of Indian States, of British officials, and British capital and Indian capital, and of the owners of big zamindaris are ever thrust before us, and they clamour for protection. The unhappy millions who really need protection are almost voiceless, and have few advocates. So long as the British Empire continues in India, in whatever shape it may do so, it will strengthen

these vested interests and create more. And each one of them will be a fresh obstacle in our way. Of necessity the Government has to rely on oppression, and the symbol of its rule is the secret service with its despicable and contemptible train of agents, provacateurs, informers and approvers.

**We have had much controversy about independence and Dominion Status, and we have quarrelled about words. But the real thing is the conquest of power by whatever name it may be called. I do not think that any form of Dominion Status applicable to India will give us real power. A test of this power would be the entire withdrawal of the alien army of occupation and economic control. Let us, therefore, concentrate on these and the rest will follow easily.**

We stand, therefore, to-day for the fullest freedom of India. This Congress did not acknowledge and will not acknowledge the right of the British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal. But we do appeal to the parliament and conscience of the world, and to them we shall declare, I hope, that India submits no longer to any foreign domination. To-day or to-morrow we may not be strong enough to assert our will. We are very conscious of our weakness, and there is no boasting in us or pride of strength. But let no one, least of all England, mistake or underrate the meaning or strength of our resolve. Solemnly, with full knowledge of consequence, I hope, we shall take it and there will be no turning back. A great nation cannot be thwarted for long when once its mind is clear and resolved. If to-day we fail and to-morrow brings no success, the day after will follow and bring achievement.

*We are weary of strife and hunger for peace and opportunity to work constructively for our country. Do we enjoy the breaking up of our homes and the sight of our brave young men going to prison or facing the halter? Does the worker like going on strike and losing even his miserable pittance and starving? He does so by sheer compulsion when there is no other way for him. And we who take this perilous path of national strife do so because there is no other way to an honourable peace. But we long for peace, and the hand of fellowship will always be stretched out to all who may care to grasp it. But behind the hand will be a body which will not bend to injustice and a mind that will not surrender on any vital point.*

With the struggle before us the time for determining our furture constitution is not yet. For two years or more we have

drawn up constitutions, and finally the All-Parties Committee put a crown to these efforts by drawing up a scheme of its own which the Congress adopted for a year. The labour that went to the making of this scheme was not wasted, and India has profited by it. But the year is past and we have to face new circumstances which require action rather than constitution-making. Yet we cannot ignore the problems that beset us and that will make or mar our struggle and our future constitution. We have to aim at social adjustment and equilibrium, and to overcome the forces of disruption that have been the bane of India.

**I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even the kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy.** I recognize, however, that it may not be possible for a body constituted as is this National Congress, and in the present circumstances of the country, to adopt a full Socialistic programme. But we must realize that the philosophy of Socialism has gradually permeated the entire structure of society the world over, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods of advance to its full realization. India will have to go that way, too, if she seeks to end her poverty and inequality, though she may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race.

We have three major problems—the minorities, the Indian States, and labour and peasantry. I have dealt already with the question of minorities. I shall only repeat that we must give the fullest assurance by our words and deeds that their culture and traditions will be safe.

The Indian States, even for India, are the most curious relics of a bygone age. Many of their rulers apparently still believe in the divine right of kings—puppet kings though they be—and consider the State and all it contains to be their personal proper.y, which they can squander at will. A few of them have a sense of responsibility and have endeavoured to serve their people, but many of them have hardly any redeeming feature. It is perhaps unjust to blame them, for they are but the products of a vicious system, and it is the system that will ultimately have to go. One of the rulers has told us frankly that even in case of war between India and England he will stand for England and fight against his mother country.

That is the measure of his patriotism. It is not surprising, then, that they claim, and their claim finds acceptance with the British Government, that they alone can represent their subjects at any conference, and no one even of their subjects may have any say. The Indian States cannot live apart from the rest of India, and their rulers must, unless they accept their inevitable limitations, go the way of others who thought like them. And the only people who have a right to determine the future of the States must be the people of those States, including the rulers. This Congress which claims self-d·termination cannot deny it to the people of the States. Meanwhile, the Congress is perfectly willing to confer with such rulers as are prepared to do so, and to devise means whereby the transition may not be too sudden. But in no event can the people of the States be ignored.

**Our third major problem is the biggest of all. For India means the peasantry and labour, and to the extent that we raise them and satisfy their wants, will we succeed in our task.** And the measure of the strength of our national movement will be the measure of their adherence to it. We can only gain them to our side by our espousing their cause, which is really the country's cause. The Congress, it is said, must hold the balance fairly between capital and labour and zamindar and tenant. But the balance has been and is terribly weighted on one side, and to maintain the *status quo* is to maintain injustice and exploitation. The only way to right it is to do away with the domination of any one class over another. The All-India Congress Committee accepted this ideal of social and economic change in a resolution it passed some months ago in Bombay. I hope the Congress will also set its seal on it, and will further draw up a programme of such changes as can be immediately put in operation.

In this programme perhaps the Congress as a whole cannot go very far to-day. But it must keep the ultimate ideal in view and work for it. The question is not one merely of wages and charity doled out by an employer or landlord. Paternalism in industry or in the land is but a form of charity with all its sting and its utter incapacity to root out the evil. The new theory of trusteeship, which some advocate, is equally barrent. For trusteeship means that the power for good or evil remains with the self-appointed trustee, and he may exercise it as he will. The sole trusteeship that can be fair is the trusteeship of the

nation and not of one individual or a group. Many Englishmen honestly consider themselves the trustees for India, and yet to what a condition have they reduced our country!

**We have to decide for whose benefit industry must be run and the land produce food. To-day the abundance that the land produces is not for the peasant or the labourer who work on it ; and industry's chief function is supposed to be to produce millionaires. However golden the harvest and heavy the dividends, the mud huts and hovels and nakedness of our people testify to the glory of the British Empire and of our present social system.**

Our economic programme must, therefore, be based on a human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers, then the industry must close down. If the worker on the land have not enough to eat, then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort and humane hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit. The All-Parties Committee accepted the principle and included it in their recommendation. I hope the Congress will also do so, and will in addition be prepared to accept its natural consequences. Further, that it will adopt the well-known demands of labour for a better life, and will give every assistance to it to organize itself and prepare itself for the day when it can control industry on a co-operative basis.

But industrial labour is only a small part of India, although it is rapidly becoming a force that cannot be ignored. It is the peasantry that cry loudly and piteously for relief, and our programme must deal with their present condition. Real relief can only come by a great change in the land laws and the basis of the present system of land tenure. We have among us many big landowners, and we welcome them. But they must realise that the ownership of large estates by individuals, which is the outcome of a state resembling the old feudalism of Europe, is a rapidly disappearing phenomenon all over the world. Even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism the large estates are being split up and given to the peasantry who work on them. In India also we have large areas where the system of peasant proprietorship prevails, and we shall have to extend this all over the

country. I hope that in doing so we may have the co-operation of some at least of the big landowners.

It is not possible for this Congress at its annual session to draw up any detailed economic programme. It can only lay down some general principles and call upon the All-India Congress Committee to fill in the details in co-operation with the representatives of the Trades Union Congress and other organizations which are vitally interested in this matter. Indeed I hope that the co-operation between this Congress and the Trades Union Congress will grow, and the two organizations will fight side by side in future struggles.

All these are pious hopes till we gain power, and the real problem, therefore, before us is the conquest of power. We shall not do so by subtle reasoning or argument or lawyers' quibbles, but by the forging of sanctions to enforce the nation's will To that end this Congress must address itself.

The past year has been one of preparation for us, and we have made every effort to reorganize and strengthen the Congress organization. The results have been considerable, and our organization is in a better state to-day than at any time since the reaction which followed the Non-co-operation Movement. But our weaknesses are many and are apparent enough. Mutual strife, even within Congress Committee, is unhappily too common and election squabbles drain all our strength and energy. How can we fight a great fight if we cannot get over this ancient weakness of ours and rise above our petty selves ? I earnestly hope that with a strong programme of action before the country our perspective will improve and we will not tolerate this barren and demoralizing strife.

What can this programme be ? Our choice is limited, not by our own constitution, which we can change at our will, but by facts and circumstances. Article 1 of our Constitution lays down that our methods must be legitimate and peaceful. Legitimate I hope they will always be, for we must not sully the great cause for which we stand by any deed that will bring dishonour to it and that we may ourselves regret later. Peaceful I should like them to be, for the methods of peace are more desirable and more enduring than those of violence. Violence too often brings reaction and demoralization in its train, and in our country specially it may lead to disruption. It is perfectly

true that organized violence rules the world to-day, and it may be that we could profit by its use. But we have not the material or the training for organized violence, and individual or sporadic violence is a confession of despair. The great majority of us, I take it, judge the issue not on moral but on practical grounds, and if we reject the way of violence, it is because it promises no substantial results. But if this Congress or the nation at any future time comes to the conclusion that methods of violence will rid us of slavery, then I have no doubt that it will adopt them. Violence is bad, but slavery, is far worse. Let us also remember that the great apostle of non-violence has himself told us that it is better to fight than to refuse to fight out of cowardice.

*Any great movement for liberation to-day must necessarily be a mass movement, and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, except in times of organized revolt. Whether we have the non-co-operation of a decade ago or the modern industrial weapon of the general strike, the basis is peaceful organization and peaceful action. And if the principal movement is a peaceful one, contemporaneous attempts at sporadic violence can only distract attention and weaken it. It is not possible to carry on at one and the same time the two movements side by side. We have to choose and strictly to abide by our choice. What the choice of this Congress is likely to be I have no doubt. It can only choose a peaceful mass movement.*

Should we repeat the programme and tactics of the non-co-operation movement? Not necessarily, but the basic idea must remain. Programmes and tactics must be made to fit in with circumstances, and it is neither easy nor desirable for this Congress at this stage to determine them in detail. That should be the work of its executive, the All-India Congress Committee. But the principles have to be fixed.

The old programme was one of the three boycotts—councils, law courts and schools—leading up to refusal of service in the army and non-payment of taxes. When the national struggle is at its height, I fail to see how it will be possible for any person engaged in it to continue in the courts or the schools. But still I think that it will be unwise to declare a boycott of the courts and schools at this stage. The boycott of the legislative councils had led to much heated debate in the past, and this Congress itself has been rent in twain over it. We need not revive that controversy, for the circumstances to-day are entirely different. I feel that the step the Congress took some years ago to permit Congress men to enter the councils was an inevitable step, and I am not

prepared to say that some good has not resulted from it. But we have exhausted that good, and there is no middle course left to-day between boycott and full co-operation. All of us know the demoralization that these sham legislatures have brought in our ranks, and how many of our good men, their committees and commissions have lured away. Our workers are limited in number, and we can have no mass movement unless they concentrate on it and turn their backs on the palatial council-chambers of our legislatures. And if we declare for independence, how can we enter the councils and carry on our humdrum and profitless activities there ? No programme or policy can be laid down for ever, nor can this Congress bind the country or even itself to pursue one line of action indefinitely. But to-day I would respectfully urge the Congress that the only policy in regard to the councils is a complete boycott of them. The All-India Congress recommended this course in July last, and the time has come to give effect to it.

*Our programme must, therefore, be one of political and economic boycott. It is not possible for us, so long as we are not actually independent, and not even then completely, to boycott another country wholly or to sever all connection with it. But our endeavour must be to reduce all points of contact with the British Government and to rely on ourselves. We must also make it clear that Indians will not accept responsibility for all the debts that England has piled on her.* The Gaya Congress repudiated liability to pay these debts, and we must repeat this repudiation and stand by it. Such of India's public debt, as has been used for purposes beneficial to India, we are prepared to admit and pay back. But we wholly deny all liability to pay back the vast sums which have been raised so that India may be held in subjection and her burdens may be increased. In particular, the poverty-stricken people of India cannot agree to shoulder the burden of the wars fought by England to extend her domain or consolidate her position in India. Nor can they accept the many concessions lavishly bestowed, without even proper compensation, on foreign exploiters.

This boycott will only be a means to an end. It will release energy and divert attention to the real struggle, which must take the shape of non-payment of taxes and, where possible, with the co-operation of the labour movement, general strikes. But non-payment of taxes must be well organized in specific areas, and for this purpose the Congress should authorize the All-India Congress Committee to take the

necessary action wherever and whenever it considers desirable.

I have not so far referred to the constructive programme of the Congress. This should certainly continue, but the experience of the last few years shows us that by itself it does not carry us swiftly enough. It prepares the ground for future action, and ten years' silent work is bearing fruit to-day. In particular we shall, I hope, continue our boycott of foreign cloth and the boycott of British goods.

**I have not referred so far to the Indians overseas and I do not propose to say much about them. This is not from any want of fellow-feeling with our brethren in East Africa or South Africa or Fiji or elsewhere, who are bravely struggling against great odds. But their fate will be decided in the plains of India, and the struggle we are launching into is as much for them as for ourselves.**

For this struggle we want efficient machinery. Our Congress constitution and organization have become too archaic and slow-moving, and are ill-suited to times of crisis. The times of great demonstrations are past. We want quiet and irresistible action now, and this can only be brought about by the strictest discipline in our ranks. Our resolutions must be passed in order to be acted upon. The Congress will gain in strength, however small its actual membership may become, if it acts in a disciplined way. Small determined minorities have changed the fate of nations. Mobs and crowds can do little. Freedom itself involves restraint and discipline, and each one of us will have to subordinate himself to the larger good.

The Congress represents no small minority in the country, though many may be too weak to join it or to work for it, they look to it with hope and longing to bring them deliverance. Ever since the Calcutta resolution the country has waited with anxious expectation for this great day when this Congress meets. None of us can say what and when we can achieve. We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act ; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes ; and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

We have conspiracy cases going on in various parts of the country. They are ever with us. But the time has gone for secret conspiracy. We have now an Open Conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule and you, comrades, and all our countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison and, it may be, death. But you shall also have the satisfaction that you have done your little bit for India, the ancient but ever young, and have helped a little in the liberation of humanity from its present bondage.

## CHAPTER XVI

# The Political Quagmire

[What are the fundamental problems of Indian politics? Jawaharlal answered every question at a meeting held in London, February 4, 1936 under the auspices of the Indian Conciliation Group. There is hardly an aspect of Indian affairs which was not touched and tackled. Jawaharlal's exposition of the Indian situation is masterly. The questions which he answered are being asked again and again inside and outside the country. Nobody has grasped them so thoroughly as Nehru. By comprehending his arguments, we put our fingers on the very pulse of the great and intricate problem of independence. Mr. Carl Health, the Chairman, put the following questions to Mr. Nehru :—

(1) Will you outline what is meant by the term "Complete Independence of India" ?

(2) Do you recognize the need for an intermediate period of transition, and, if so, does the India Act in any way meet this ? If not, what are the next steps to be taken ?

(3) What is the relation of Indian problem in regard to world problems ? Does the League of Nations help in this connection ?

(4) How far is the communal problem due to economic causes ?

(5) What alternative methods would you use for dealing with the situation on the North-West Frontier ? And similarly for the situation in Bengal ?

**(6) In what ways can people in this country help ? What part do you think a Conciliation Group can play ?**

**(7) Should not the Indian National Movement maintain some kind of effective agency in London for the purpose of spreading accurate information ?]**

Mr. Chairman and friends, first of all may I point out that, although I happen to have been elected the President of the next session of the Indian National Congress, I do not speak in any such capacity but entirely on my own behalf. In any event I should not have been able to speak as President of the Congress, but that is especially so because I have been really cut off from my colleagues and the leaders of the Congress Movement in India for a number of years, and it is difficult for me to get into touch with living currents of thought in India without being in that country for sometime.

These questions that have been framed are fairly comprehensive. One could say a great deal about them or deal with them briefly. I suppose it would be best if I tried to deal with them fairly briefly, because there is not very much time at our disposal this afternoon, and I shall try (although I am not likely to succeed) to say only that which is pertinent to the subjects dealt with in the questions.

(1) With regard to the first question : **" Will you outline what is meant by the term 'Complete independence for India' ?"** presumably the reference is to this phrase occuring in the first Article of the Congress Constitution. Therein it refers, I take it, to the political side only and not to the economic side. Of course, the Congress as a whole is beginning to think on economic lines also and otherwise develope its economic policy, and some of us, including myself, think much more on the lines of economic freedom than on the line of political freedom. Obviously economic freedom includes political freedom. But, defining this phrase simply in its political sense, as it occurs in the Congress Constitution, it means national freedom, not only domestic but foreign, financial, military, *i. e.* control of the military and control of foreign affairs ; in other words, whatever national freedom usually signifies. **That does not mean necessarily that we lay stress on an isolation of India or a breaking away of India from such associations as might exist with England or with other countries, but it does mean—the word**

**"independence" is used specially to lay stress on the fact—that we want to break the imperialist connection with Britain. If imperialism survives in England, we must part from England, because so long as imperialism survives in England, the only connection between England and India is likely to be the connection of an imperialist domination in India in some form or other.** It may become vaguer and vaguer ; it may become less obvious than it is ; it may even not be obvious on the political side and yet be very powerful on the economic side. Therefore, in terms of imperialist Britain, the independence of India means the separation of India from England. Personally I can conceive and welcome the idea of a close association between India and England on terms other than those of imperialism.

(2) The second question is :—" **Do you recognize the need for an intermediate period of transition, and, if so, does the India Act in any way meet this ? If not, what are the next steps to be taken ?**" Whenever any change comes about, inevitably there are all manner of intermediate and transitional phases, but often it so happens that the structure of government becomes rather petrified and does not change rapidly enough, while economic and other changes are inevitably going on, because economic changes do not wait for laws and enactments ; they go on while the structure does not change. The result is that in extreme cases there are big upheavals which forcibly change the structure, and those are called revolutions, but even in that case there are transition periods. I take this question refers more to the structure of government than to any intermediate period and it is therefore difficult to answer, because that depends on so many factors. It depends partly on us but largely on the British Government and largely on various forces, national and international. Obviously if there was a mutual arrangement between Britain and the people of India there would inevitably be transitional stages in the process of reaching that goal. It might take a long time, but there would have to be some steps in the process ; one cannot suddenly and all at once bring about a big change. On the other hand if there is no possibility of a change being brought about by mutual agreement, then there are likely to be upheavals, and it is difficult to say what the result of an upheaval will be. It depends on the size of the upheaval ; it depends on the great economic forces that cause the upheaval, and anything might happen, because, as I conceive it, the fundamental problem of India really is economic in its various aspects.

*The chief problem is the land problem, with its enormous amount of unemployment and over-pressure on land, and connected with that is the industrial problem, because probably if one tries to solve the land problem one will have to consider the question of industry.* There are also many other problems, such as unemployment in the middle classes, and they will really have to be tackled all together, so that they may fit into each other, and not individually and separately.

All these problems have to be tackled for many reasons, but the fundamental reason is that the economic situation is growing worse and the condition of the vast masses is going further and further down. They cannot be tackled by merely changing the political structure at the top. The political structure might be such as to help us in tackling the problems, and the real test of the political structure is this : Does it help us and will it make easier for us to tackle these problems and solve them ?

With regard to an intermediate period, therefore, all one can say is that there is bound to be some intermediate period. We are passing through an intermediate period now, but whether the development is going to be by arrangement or agreement or by sudden jumps or big jumps, the future alone can show.

In India the Congress and some groups outside the Congress have suggested that the proper and democratic way to deal with the political aspect of the problem is by means of a Constituent Assembly, that is to say, fundamentally the people of India should decide the Constitution of India ; they do not admit that the people of India should remain merely passive agents of a foreign authority in regard to the drawing up of such a Constitution. The only way in which the desires of the people of India can take shape is through some such Constituent Assembly. To-day that is not a feasible proposition, simply because it cannot be put into effect unless the British Government itself decides to put an end to its domination in India and leave the Indian people to develop their own Constitution, or, whether the British Government so decides or not, the pressure of events brings it about, because a real Constituent Assembly involves ultimately or, in fact, in the near future after it is formed, the end of British domination in India. A Constituent Assembly does not mean merely a group of so-called leaders coming together and drawing up a Constitution. The whole idea behind the Constituent Assembly

is this : that it should be elected by means of an adult franchise, men and women together, so that there should be really mass representation, in order to give effect to the economic urges of the masses. The present difficulty is that a number of upper middle-class people sit down and, instead of talking in terms of economics, they discuss the question of offices in the new Constitution and who will be appointed to them ; there is a desire to share in the spoils of office, in patronage, and so forth, which the new Constitution might bring, and that partly gives rise to the communal problem. If the mass elements take part in the election of the Constituent Assembly, obviously they will not be interested in getting jobs in the new Constitution ; they are interested in their own economic troubles and attention will immediately be given to social and economic issues, whilst some of the other problems, which appear to loom large but are fundamentally not important, will recede into the background, like the communal problem.

The second part of the question is : Does the India Act in any way meet the need for an intermediate period of transition ? I have just said the test of a Constitution is this : Whether it helps us to solve the economic problems which face us and which are the real problems. The India Act, as you perhaps know, has been criticized from almost every possible angle by almost every possible group in India, moderate or advanced. I doubt if it has any friends at all in India. If there are a few persons who are prepared to tolerate it, either they belong to the big vested interests in India or they are people who by sheer habit tolerate everything that the British Government does. Apart from these people, almost every political group in India has taken the strongest exception to the India Act. They all object to it and have criticized it in very great detail, and the general feeling is that, far from helping us, it really takes us back and it binds our hands and feet so tightly that we cannot get a move on. All the vested interests in Britain and in India have found such a permanent place in this Act that any substantial, social or economic change or political change becomes almost impossible, short of revolution. On the one hand, under the India Act we cannot even endeavour to make substantial economic changes ; on the other hand, we cannot change the India Act itself. You must not think that in the India Act we are getting some democratic instrument which can be developed into something better. That is not so. You must not apply the analogy of the various steps taken in the Dominions—in Canada

and in Australia—in the early stages of the development of self-government in those countries. The problems there were simple ; there were simple communities to be dealt with, and, whatever the steps taken were, there was room for inevitable development, and that development did take place. That does not apply to India at all. **To-day India has not to face a simple problem ; it has to face a very complicated economic problem and the decision to be taken on that problem cannot be postponed.** Secondly, the India Act is such that it cannot be developed. Of course, there can be development from time to time if the British Government itself changes the India Act, but, as it is, even if 99 or 100 per cent. of the people of India want to change it they cannot do so. It has no seeds of change in it ; it is a permanent fixing of chains of the vested interest on the Indian people. The only choice that is offered to the Indian people is to submit to it or, if they want to change it, to revolt against it in some form or other. Therefore the India Act does not in any way meet the need for an intermediate period of transition. Under the Act a wider electorate is created, and that is a desirable thing, but it is the only desirable thing in the Act.

(3) The third question is : **" What is the relation of the Indian problem in regard to the world problems ? Does the League of Nations help in this connection ?** I think that nearly all the major problems that we have to face in the world to-day—in Europe or India or China or America—are intimately connected together, and it is really difficult to understand any one of them or ultimately to solve any one of them without thinking of the other problems. *The different parts of the world to-day are becoming extraordinarily interrelated with each other, and events which happen in one part of the world immediately react and interact upon the other parts of the world. If there is a big thing such as an international war, obviously the whole world is upset. If there is an economic crisis—we have had a very big one in the last few years—that affects the whole world. These big waves and movements affect the whole world, obviously the Indian problem is intimately connected with other problems. Anything big that happens in India obviously affects the whole British group of nations—British imperialism. Anything that affects British imperialism makes a great difference in the world, because British imperialism to-day is a very important factor in world politics. So far as India is concerned, it is a well-known fact that India has had the greatest influence on British foreign policy in the last hundred years or so.* During the Napoleonic period India

loomed large ; although perhaps when you read about the Napoleonic campaigns you find that India is seldom mentioned, it was in the background all the time. Whether it was the Crimean War or the occupation of Egypt, always there was the question of India in the background and the routes to India. The routes to India have often been before British statesmen. Perhaps some of you may remember that even after the Great War there was an idea, fostered by Mr. Winston Churchill and some of the leading figures in British public life, of having an enormous Middle Eastern Empire from the borders of India to Constantinople, but it did not take shape. It sounds rather curious now, but at that time, after the war, all that area was in British occupation ; Persia was in British occupation, and so were Mesopotamia, Palestine, parts of Arabia, and Constantinople. Therefore the idea was not such a fanciful one as it seems to be now, but various things happened to prevent its taking shape ; there was the Soviet Government and there were events in Turkey and Persia and so forth, and the whole thing was upset by various developments. Even so, the object of the British Government was to control the land route to India, because the land route was becoming important, owing to the development of aeroplanes and motor traffic. The question of Mosul nearly brought about conflict between Turkey and England, chiefly because Mosul dominates the land route to India.

Therefore from many points of view, the question of India affects world problems very greatly. Anything that happens to India inevitably affects other countries.

With regard to the League of Nations in this connection, the League of Nations might perhaps help India if the Indian viewpoint was put before it properly and pressed before it, but so far the position has been that India has really nothing to do with the League of Nations except that it is represented on the League. The so-called Indian representatives on the League of Nations are nominated by the Government of India in consultation with the British Government so that they really represent on the League the viewpoint of the British Government ; they do not represent in the slightest Indian public opinion. Therefore you might say that India is not represented at all on the League of Nations, but that the British Government gets an extra representative. If India could be properly represented, I suppose the League of Nations would do some good, although

fundamentally the League of Nations, of course, is an organization for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the world, and obviously the Indian people desire to change their *status quo*. Therefore, if they laid any fundamental proposition before the League of Nations, it would probably be barred under some section of the Covenant or of the rules under which the League functions, on the ground that it would interfere with the domestic policy of the British Empire.

(4) With regard to the fourth question : **"How far is the communal problem due to economic causes ?"** This question perhaps is not properly framed (I am partly responsible for that), in the sense that the communal question is not fundamentally due to economic causes. It has an economic background which often influences it, but it is due much more to political causes. It is not due to religious causes ; I should like you to remember that. *Religious hostility or antagonism has very little to do with communal question. It has something to do with the communal question in that there is a slight background of religious hostility which has in the past sometimes given rise to conflict and sometimes to broken heads, in the case of processions and so forth, but the present communal question is not a religious one, although sometimes it exploits religious sentiment and there is trouble.* It is a political question of the upper middle classes which has arisen partly because of the attempts of the British Government to weaken the national movement or to create rifts in it, and partly because of the prospect of political power coming into India and the upper classes desiring to share in the spoils of office. It is to this extent economic, that the Mohammadans, the Muslims, are on the whole the poorer community as compared with the Hindus. Sometimes you find that the creditors are the Hindus and the debtors the Mohammadans ; sometimes the landlord are Hindus and the tenants are Mohammadans. Of course, the Hindus are tenants also, and they form the majority of the population. It sometimes happens that a conflict is really between a money-lender and his debtors or between a landlord and his tenants, but it is reported in the Press and it assumes importance as a communal conflict between Hindus and Mohammadans. Fundamentally this communal problem is a problem of the conflict between the members of the upper middle-class Hindus and Muslims for jobs and power under the new Constitution. It does not affect the masses at all. Not a single communal demand has the least reference to any

economic issues in India or has the least reference to the masses. If you examine the communal demands you will see that they refer only to seats in the Legislature or to various kinds of jobs which might be available in the future.

(5) The next question is : **" What alternative method would you use for dealing with the situation on the North-West Frontier ? And similiarly for the situation in Bengal ?"** Briefly put, the alternative method I would suggest is the method of conciliation plus some kind of effort to deal with the problem on economic lines, because fundamentally the difficulty of the frontier men is scarcity. They live in a hard country, on the mountain sides, and they come down in search of food and loot. Personally I do not think the frontier problem is very difficult of solution. If a proper and friendly approach is made, I think it ought to be solved fairly easily. As a matter of fact, my own impression is that a similar—not exactly the same, but a similar—problem was faced in the nineteenth century by the Russian Government, that is to say, the old Tsarist Government, because their frontier was fairly near and they had to deal with more or less the same type of people. So far as I know, they never had any great difficulty in dealing with them ; certainly they did not have the amount of difficulty that the British Government has had for a hundred years or so. *If one thing is obvious it is this, that the British Government's frontier policy has been a dismal and total failure. If they are unable to settle the frontier question after having dealt with it for generations, having had every year, or every other year, a military expedition with slaughter and bombing and all the rest of it, obviously there is something wanting in their policy.* The Tsarist Government never had to face all the difficulties which the British Government has to face, the reason being, I think, that the Tsarist Government made it possible for the frontier men to lead a more normal life ; they tried to colonize them, to settle them on the land. I am only putting this forward as a suggestion ; I do not know enough about the matter to state definitely why the Tsarist Government did not have the same difficulty that the British Government has in dealing with the frontier men. Anyhow, the population involved is not large. and it should not be difficult to deal with them on economic lines, so that this economic urge might disappear. For the rest, obviously the approach must be friendly and not like the recent approach of the Italians in Abyssinia. That kind of approach has failed completely. **The frontier men are very brave people ; they do not very much care whether they**

live or die, but they do not like to be dominated. They are freedom-loving people, as mountain people often are and the British Government has not been able to subdue them permanently. It can conquer them from time to time but it cannot subdue them.

With regard to a friendly approach, for years past Mr. Gandhi has been invited by the frontier people to go to them. I believe he went to the Frontier Province some years ago, but he has never crossed the frontier or gone right up to it. His name, however, is very well known on both sides of the frontier. He is very popular with the frontier men and repeated invitations have been extended to him to visit them, but the Government has not allowed him to do so. He did not want to go in defiance of the orders of the Government ; he did not want to invite conflict on that issue, so whenever he wanted to go he always referred the matter to the Viceroy or the Government of India, saying : "I have been asked to go there and I should like to go," and he always got the same answer, to this effect : "We strongly advise you not to go." That was almost tantamount to an order, and so he has not gone. Apart from Mr. Gandhi, the great leader of the Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, has quite an extraordinary influence and popularity all over that region. It is astounding how he has become such a tremendous figure in that area. That in itself, of course, was quite sufficient to make the British Government dislike him intensely. A man who has such a commanding influence over these turbulent Pathans is a man who will not be liked by any Government agency. He, therefore, spends his time in prison ; he is in prison at the present moment. After two or three years of detention without trial he came out last year, but he was out for only three months; and then he was sent back to prison for a two years' sentence, which he is serving now. As you perhaps know, he is a member of the highest Congress Executive. He is one of the most popular men not only on the frontier but in the whole of India. You will realize from his name that he is a Mohammadan and not a Hindu. He is one of the greatest Muslim leaders of the masses in India. He occupies one of the highest positions in the Congress movement. You must remember that the Congress movement, although it is inevitably composed chiefly of Hindus, has a very stiff backing of Muslims. *Therefore if Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mr. Gandhi did go to the Frontier, I think they would have the most magnificent reception there, and they could discuss the Frontier problem there with*

*others. I do not think it would be very difficult to solve that problem. I do not mean to say that such a visit would put an end to all troubles ; that is absurd. Certain troubles will arise again and again, but the foundations of stability could be laid, and if some economic remedies were also applied I think an end could be definitely put to this recurring trouble.*

With regard to Bengal, terrorism in Bengal has gained far greater prominence and advertisement than it really deserves. That it has existed there, and that it exists there now to some extent is undeniable, but, after all, when you come to think of it, if in a country like India or a great province like Bengal one or two terrorist acts are committed in the course of two or three years (in the last two years, I think, none have taken place and in the year before there were one or two), although it is deplorable it is not such a terrible thing. We must not lose our sense of proportion in this matter. That is the first fact I want to put before you. Secondly, so far as my knowledge goes (obviously I have no direct immediate knowledge, because I have been in prison for two or three years), there is really no organized terrorist movement now. There was, but I do not think there is now in Bengal, or elsewhere in India. **I do not mean by that that people in Bengal or elsewhere do not believe in methods of violence ; there are many who believe in methods of violence and revolution, but I think that even those who used to believe in acts of terrorism do not do so now ; that is to say the old terrorists, or many of them, still think that in all probability some kind of armed violence might be necessary to fight the dominating power, but they think in terms of insurrection, violence, or some kind of organized revolt ; they do not think in terms of throwing bombs or shooting down people.** Many of them, I think, were drawn completely away from the terrorist movement by Mr. Gandhi's peaceful movement, but even those who remained turned away from the purely terrorist attitude, which, as you know, is a very infantile attitude in political movements. When a national movement begins there is always a certain background of sentiment, helplessness and hopelessness, which drives an excited youth to an act of terrorism, but, as the movement develops and goes stronger, the energy of the people is directed towards organized activity, towards mass action, and so forth. That has happened in India, and inevitably the terrorist movement has practically ended, but the extraordinary amount of terrible repression that has gone on in Bengal inevitably gives rise to

some reprisals on the part of the old terrorist group. For instance, an individual may become exceedingly bitter because of certain things that have happened to his own friends in his own city. Terrible things are happening there, and as a reaction the individual or two or three individuals may decide on an act of reprisal directed towards the person who did those things. That has nothing to do with terrorism as an organization; it is purely an individual act of reprisal. Such an act of terrorism sometimes occurs, but, as I have said, even that has not happened for the last two years. Again, the old terrorists are more or less well-known to the police. Many of them are interned or imprisoned and many of them have been executed, but a number of them, I suppose, are still about. I met one of them two or three years ago. He was a big man in the terrorist movement in the old days and he came to see me and said: "I am definitely of opinion that these acts of terrorism are no good. I do not want to do them. I am inducing my people not to do them. But what am I to do? I am hunted like a dog. I go about from place to place. I know that whenever I am caught I shall have to suffer the death penalty. I do not propose to do that. When I am caught I shall shoot in self-defence." One often finds that it is when an old terrorist has been rounded up or is on the point of being caught that he shoots. The net closes round him, and he prefers shooting and being shot and dying in that way to being sent to the gallows.

What I mean is this: the movement is not functioning at all in an aggressive way. Sometimes an individual may commit an act of terrorism in a moment of excitement or in self-defence when he is being caught; otherwise terrorism is over. Obviously when such a thing happens it has some psychological or other roots from which it arises, and it is quite absurd to deal with it by a permanent system of martial law. *The average military mind can think of a solution to a problem only in terms of martial law, and, unfortunately for us, in India the average civilian mind has been functioning largely in a military way. Obviously a terrorist plays with his own life. He may be going to lose his life at the very moment when he commits an act of terrorism. For instance, when a person goes into a crowded hall and shoots another person, obviously his or her life is forfeit. I cannot see how a person who is prepared to give up his life can be terrified by any military measures which may be taken. He knows when he carries out his terroristic enterprise that he is bound to die; usually he carries a little poison in his pocket and swallows it*

*after the act. What happens is that a large number of innocent people suffer.*

(6) The next question is : "**In what ways can people in this country help ? What part do you think a Conciliation Group can play ?**" That is not a very easy question for me to answer—though I have endeavoured to answer it in various places—because it depends on changing conditions here, but certainly a great deal can be done if people really do take an interest in the Indian problem and think that it requires, both from the point of view of India and from the point of view of the world, a suitable solution. *I do not suppose that in the present circumstances individual groups can make very much difference ; that is to say, they cannot change Government policy, though they might affect it in minor matters. But I think such groups can always keep conditions in India in the forefront here. For instance, even now there is no realization amongst the British people of the quite extraordinary amount of repression and denial of civil liberties that is going on in India.* I am told that about a month ago there was some reference in Parliament to political prisoners. Some Labour Members raised the question, and some Conservative Members said : "What ! Are there still any political prisoners in India ?" That question shows the amazing ignorance that prevails on the subject. There is a very large number of people in India who have been detained without trial for five years, six years and various other periods, a large number of ordinary political prisoners are being convicted from day to day and the whole apparatus of repression is functioning from day to day. I think the average Englishman or Englishwoman does not require much detailed knowledge of Indian problems to understand the problem of civil liberty ; the average English person does feel that civil liberty is a desirable thing and, when the facts of the situation in India are put before him, he is somewhat shocked ; he dislikes the utter denial of civil liberty in India. I think a great deal can be done by keeping all these facts before the people of this country, and much can be done in that way by co-operation between various groups. I believe there is a National Council for Civil Liberties here, and that could usefully co-operate with other groups in the direction I have indicated.

With regard to specific Indian problems, especially the economic conditions, the way in which the political problem depends on the economic problem is of importance, because when that subject is considered the political problem is viewed in its proper perspective. Otherwise your function in the air, as

we have been functioning at these Round Table Conferences and other conferences. A number of lawyers sit down and produce a paper Constitution which has no relation to the existing facts or position in India but has relation to only one fact, that is, that the vested interests in India want to perpetuate their existence.

*Therefore any group in this country can certainly help the cause of India and not only the cause of India but, as I think one might say, having regard to the question of civil liberties and other matters which are involved, the cause of humanity. A group could go much further if it decided to adopt the political and economic standpoint of the advanced groups but, however far it goes, it can, I think, function effectively.*

As for the Conciliation Group, I have been told that it is not an organization but a group with no specially defined limits. Such a group, I think, has done good work in the past, and I believe it can certainly do good work in the future. I have suggested that is would be desirable for the various groups interested in India as a whole or in particular questions, such as the question of civil liberties, to keep in touch with each other. They need not merge into each other, because they have different outlooks. There is no reason why one group should adopt the outlook of another group. One may not be prepared to commit itself to some points to which another group is committed, but still they may have a great deal in common. There is no reason why they should not occasionally meet together or representatives of them confer together, so that their activities might not overlap but might supplement each other.

(7) The last question is : **" Should not the Indian National Movement maintain some kind of effective agency in London for the purpose of spreading accurate information ?"** I think that would be a highly desirable thing, and I doubt whether anybody would object in principle to it. You must remember that during the last six years India has gone through a very abnormal period. During four years of that time the Congress has been an illegal movement. **We always hover on the edge of illegality, we do not know when we might be termed illegal, our funds confiscated, our property confiscated, and our offices confiscated.** That makes it a little difficult to develop a foreign agency in the ordinary way, but certainly this is desirable, and I should very much like to have some kind of information bureau here and, it may be, in some other parts of Europe, to function, a part from questions of propaganda, by giving accurate information and providing

books and papers, so that people who want that information might be able to obtain it.

THE CHAIRMAN : I think we must all feel that in dealing with these questions Mr. Nehru has given us a series of pictures of the main problems of India to-day, and he has done so in an extraordinarily interesting and lucid way. He will now answer any questions that members or the audience may like to put.

**QUESTION : We sometimes meet with the objection or the criticism that if the British withdrew from India it would only open the way for Japan. It used to be Russia, but now it is Japan that is mentioned in that connection. Might we hear Mr. Nehru's opinion on that ?**

Mr. NEHRU : It seems to me that the people who say but do not know very much about the present position or the probable future position of Japan with regard to India. The question can be considered in many ways but I would put it to you briefly thus : How do you expect Japan to come to India, by sea or by land ? Do you expect Japan to come to India after having subjugated the whole of China or before it has done so ?

You must realize that it takes a little longer to go from India to Japan than it takes to go from India to England by sea. By the land route, by air, it takes a very little time to go from England to India, but it takes a very long time to go to Japan. One cannot too easily cross over the Himalaya Mountains and the various deserts and other tracts of China. Therefore you must realize that India is not very easily accessible to Japan if Japan goes through China, so Japan has to come by a fairly intricate route through the Singapore Straits, and any hostile fleet could make it difficult for the Japanese to approach India. Even so, of course, Japan might come, but the real point is this, that Japan can never think in terms of the conquest of India so long as it has not completely subjugated China and made it part of its Empire. **The conquest of China is a very difficult matter. At the moment Japan has overrun North China and it may perhaps extend further south, but I do not think that anyone acquainted with the history of China or the present position of China or the international position, imagines that Japan is likely to succeed in consolidating her Empire in the whole of China.** China is a tremendous problem for Japan, and even if it is conquered, it will continue to be a problem and something which will really absorb the energies of Japan, and probably bring about its downfall.

*Look at Japan as it stands to-day as a World Power. It seems very strong. Nobody interferes with Japan's territorial instincts and activities. It does what it likes in North China and Manchuria. Yet fundamentally the position of Japan in the world is a very unhappy position. It is isolated from the rest of the world ; it has no friends in the world. On the one side there is a tremendous Power, America, and there is not much love lost between Japan and the United States of America. On the other side there is China, which, although weak in one sense, is very strong in many ways. It is strong fundamentatly, because its passsive strength is great ; its inertia is terrible.* But, even apart from that, the weakness of China to-day in the fact of aggression is very largely due, I think, to the fact that some of the Chinese leaders are false to China ; they are betraying China. It is not so much the weakness of China as the weakness of her leaders, Chiang Kai-shek and others, and this may lead to the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek and some kind of a combined and powerful resistance later on. Therefore, in any event, Japan would have a hostile China to deal with, whether it was subjugated or not. *With America on one side and China on the other, and the Soviet Republic in the north, which is always likely to be hostile, that Japan should embark on an adventure in India, three weeks' journey away, is to me inconceivable. Then, of course, India presumably would not sit idle. It may not be a strong country, but obviously it would do its utmost to defend itself against any aggression.*

QUESTION : We do not want to talk about only this aspect of the question, but I should like to say that Mr. Nehru seemed to me, in talking about this, to refer only to the internal aspect of the North-West Frontier question. Surely it has an external aspect also, and has had such an aspect for the last hundred years. We need not go so far as China and Japan and the Far East to consider that, because even in the very latest pronouncements of the Government of India, referenee is made to the danger—a very immediate and close danger—of Russian aggression. There we come up against that imperialistic policy which has dominated the whole of the history of the North-West Frontier, and that imperialism which Mr. Nehru says must be got rid of before he can come to any terms at all with Great Britain. **What will be the position on the North-West Frontier if that imperialism is really discarded ?** What will be the position as regards the security of India if that imperialism, which means constant jealousy and suspicion between the two great Powers, Soviet Russia and Great Britain, is finally abolished ? What will be the position with regard to the defence policy of India, and what will then be the result in the organization and the cost of the Indian army ?

Mr. NEHRU : *The result of the allaying of that suspicion would be peace and contentment on the frontier.* With regard to the defence of India against Soviet aggression.

QUESTION : And Afghanistan ; that is also an element.

Mr. NEHRU : Yes, an element. *Afghanistan is an unadvanced, industrially backward country, and as an effective military force it is strong only within its own territories. It is a difficult country to invade, because it is a mountainous country and the people are good fighters, but as an invading country it has no strength at all, so we can leave Afghanistan out of consideration.*

**With regard to Soveit Russia, the first proposition is that there is no Power in the world to-day which is more peaceful and less inclined to aggression than Soviet Russia. I think that is admitted by everybody ; it is publicly admitted by the British Foreign Office ; in fact the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, said so the other day.**

QUESTIONER : The Government of India does not say that, it says the exact opposite.

Mr. NEHRU : For various reasons. You can examine that Soviet Russia from an economic point of view does not require India in the least, as Japan might, because India is a source of raw materials for England. Raw materials exist in sufficient quantities in Soviet territories. In minor matters India might help. Fundamentally Soviet Russia does not require India ; it has not that economic urge. At the present moment it is absolutely full of its own economic problems of development, and it wants to take no risk at all of war or adventure. Obviously an invasion of India is a very big risk, not so much because of the strength of India but because any such thing involves to-day international complications, whether the invader is Japan or Russia. If Japan comes to India, it is not a question merely of defeating the people of India, but there is the risk of having to fight on various fronts. Other Powers step in and international complications are introduced. So that Russian policy to-day (nobody can say what will happen thirty years hence) is bound to be an extraordinarily peaceful policy ; there is no doubt about that. If it were not, Russia would immediately be afraid of trouble from Japan in the East and from Germany in the West. We know that many European countries fear Russia to-day. The biggest factor at work is a great fear complex of being attacked, and so the countries go on increasing their military machines. So that there is no

question of expecting, in the ordinary course, an invasion from Russia. So far as I am personally concerned, I very largely approve of the Russian system of government, and I hope some such thing will extend to India. I think we ought to be the most friendly of neighbours instead of being in conflict with each other. But, apart from that, obviously India, whatever its system of government is, whether socialist or not, will have to take steps to guard her frontiers.

QUESTIONER : Against whom ?

Mr. NEHRU : It does not matter. The steps taken may not be very extensive, but India will have to take some steps. *If the world continues to be divided up into various capitalist States, armies will have to be kept. It is relatively easy, I think, to protect India on the North-West Frontier. You have probably read histories of various invasions of India from the north-west, bvt those histories exaggerate a little. There have been invasions, but if you spread them out over a period of two or three thousand years they have not been so frequent as some people seem to think. Those invasions took place not because of the strength of the attacking force but because at the time there was internal trouble in India, and the attacking force simply walked in. An attacking force can always be stopped on the North-West-Frontier by an efficient army without any great numbers being employed.* An effecient defence force must be built up to defend India from invasion ; one has to face the risk of these things. One of the countries suffering most from a terrible fear of invasion is also at the same time one of the most powerful countries in the military sense, that is, France is terribly afraid of a Nazi invasion, and yet it has one of the biggest military machines in the world.

QUESTION : The question has not actually arisen in the course of Mr. Nehru's addresses, but **it might be of interest to know what his view is with regard to the contributions that may be expected from Indian women in the regeneration of India.**

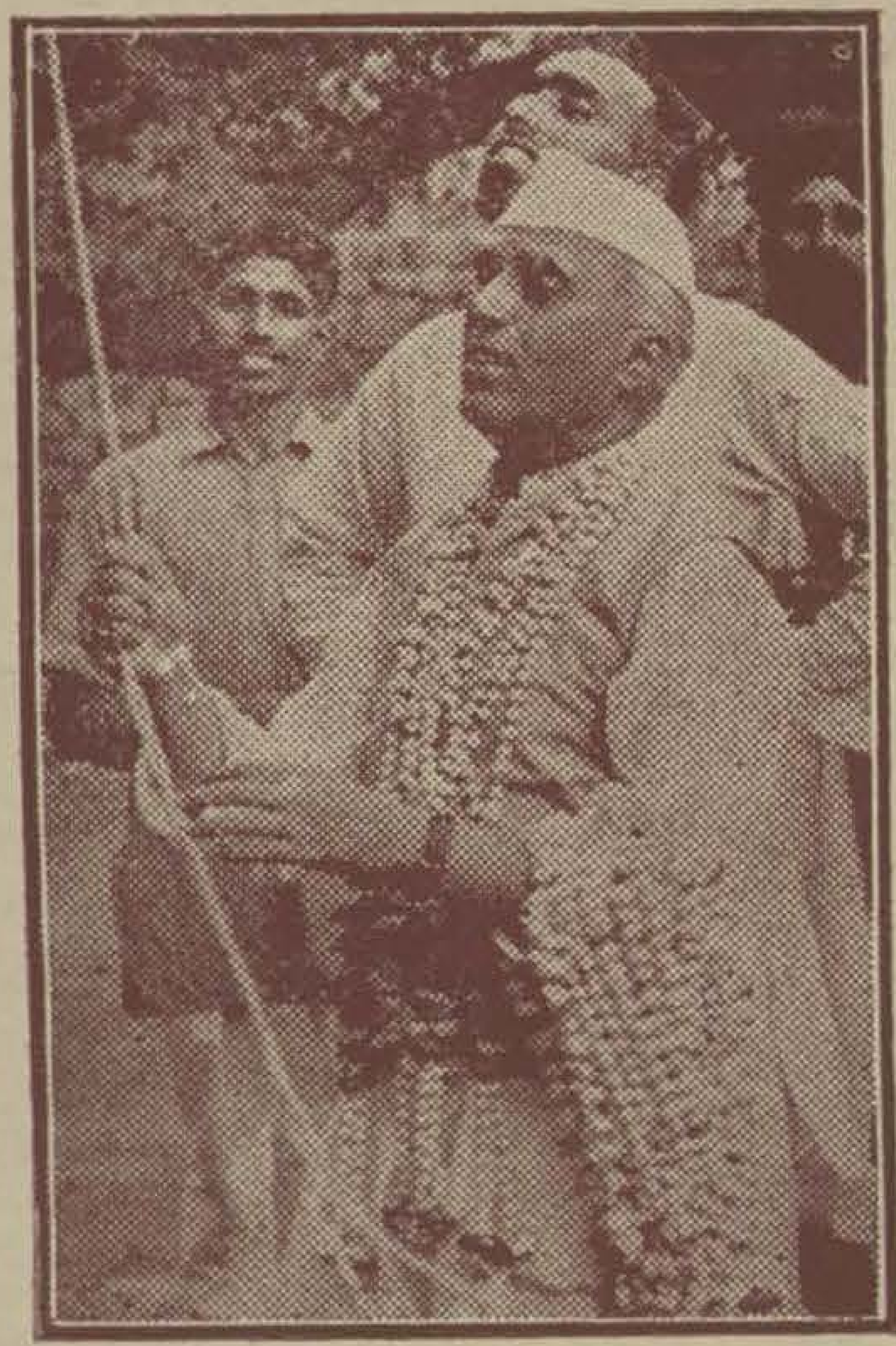
Mr. NEHRU : Those contributions have been considerable. Indian women in the last fifteen or sixteen years have played a tremendous part in our national movement. *You may remember that in 1930 Mr. Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement in connection with the Salt Tax, and I think the most important and significant feature of that movement was the tremendous part that the women of India took in it. It was astonishing. Most of us were astounded by what we saw. It was not as if we had to push them out ; they simply came out and took charge of the situation*

*when most of their menfolk were in prison, and they functioned in an extraordinarily efficient way. The surprising thing was that, although many of them had had no experience of public activity, yet they became good organizers and they ran the whole movement practically without any men for a long time. They ran it not only very well but in a much more uncompromising way than the men might have done ; they did become much more uncompromising about it in every way.* That was such a eye-opener that I do not think after that any person in India dares say that the women of India are going to play a subordinate part in the public life of India in the future. Of course, as you know, they have suffered in the past and they still suffer from a large number of social and semi-religious disabilities. They are trying to remove them, and to some extent they have to fight the inevitable reactions of men in that process. Certain orthodox elements in the community are trying to prevent them from removing these disabilities, but I think they are sufficiently alive to their task, and I do not think anyone can really stop them from carrying it out. So far as the national movement is concerned, the mere fact that such large numbers of women have taken such a large part in it, makes it absolutely impossible for any nationalist to conceive of keeping them down in any political or social sense. The Fundamental Rights Resolution which the Congress passed some years ago, laid down as a fundamental right in the Constitution, the removal of all disabilities and the absolute equality of women with men in the eyes of the Constitution.

QUESTION :—In your answer to the fourth question, regarding the communal problem, you suggested, I think, that the religious element was a small part of it and that it was not primarily economic, but that it resolved itself into political jealousy and political ambitions. How do you see it resolving in the light of the national movement ? Do you feel that the central national aim would be so big that it would bring all the parties together ?

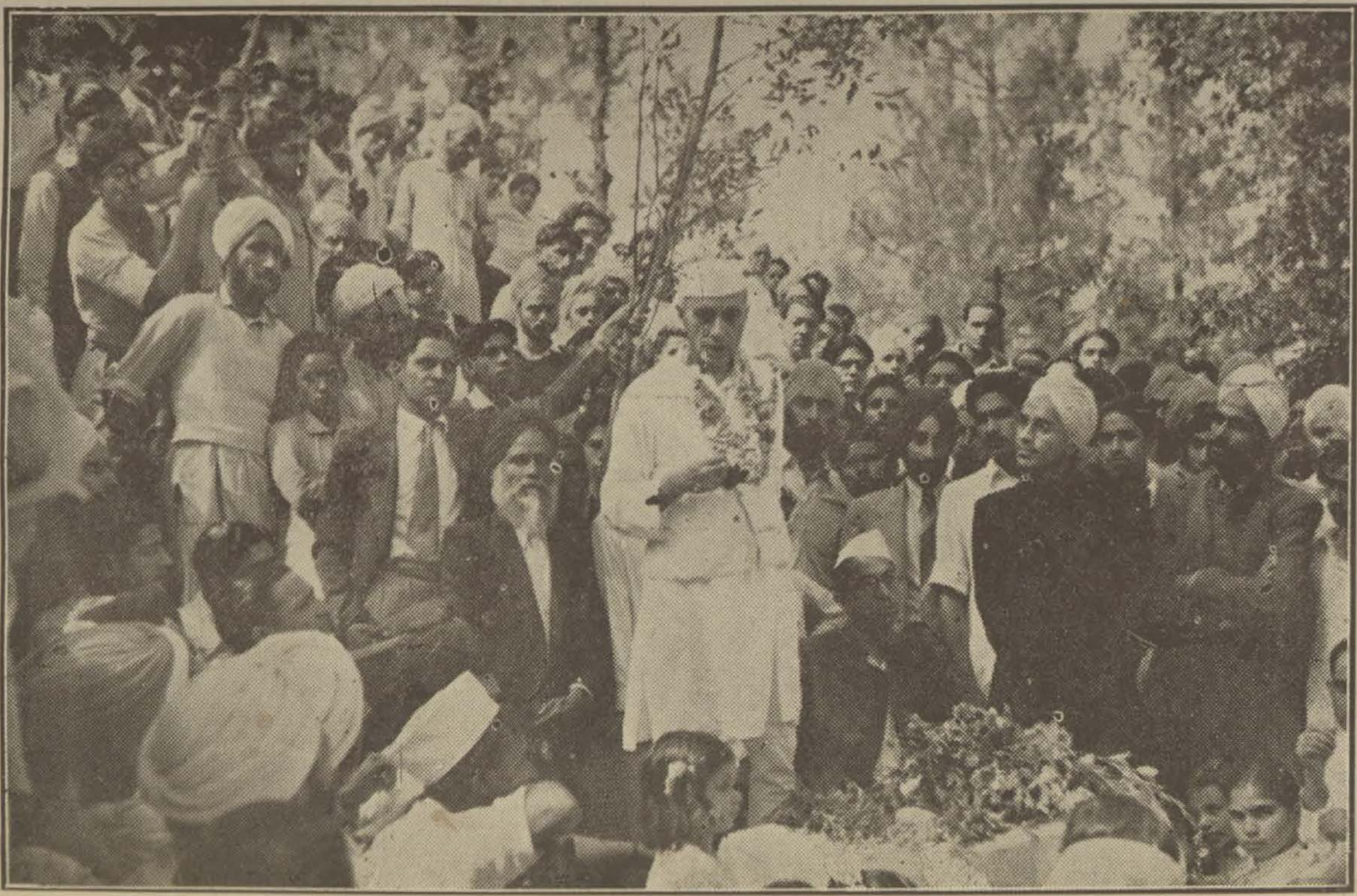
Mr. NEHRU : No, first of all I said that the communal movement was not religious, but that does not mean, of course, that there is not a religious background in India, and sometimes that is exploited. It is political mainly. It is also economic in the sense that the political problem largely arises because of the problem of unemployment in the middle classes, and it is the unemployment among the middle classes helps the communal movement to gain importance. It is there that the jobs come in. **To some extent the growth of nationalism and the nationalist spirit suppresses the com-**







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**When Pandit Nehru goes his way, thousands line up the road to hear him speak.** En route to Kashmir, Jawaharlal is making a short speech at Sunny Banks (Murree Hills) where people gathered for his "Darshan." Even though worn out with long imprisonment, Jawaharlal never disappoints the people, because he knows they trudge up to him from hundreds of miles to get his message.

**munal idea, but fundamentally it will go when economic issues and social issues come to the forefront and divert the attention of the masses, and even of the lower middle classes, because these issues really affect them, and inevitably then the communal leaders would have to sink into the background.** That happened in 1921, at the time of the first Non-co-operation Movement, when no communal leaders in India dared to come out into the open. There was no meeting held and there was no reference to them in the papers. They disappeared absolutely, because there was such a big movement on other issues. As soon as big political movement starts the communal leaders come to the forefront. They are always being pushed to the front by the British Government in India. Therefore the right way to deal with the communal question is to allow economic questions affecting the masses to be discussed. One of the chief objections to the India Act is that, because it divides India into seven or eight—I am not sure how many—separate religious compartments, it makes it difficult for economic and social questions to be brought up. Of course they will come up, because there is the economic urge behind them, but still it makes it difficult

QUESTION: **Do not you think caste comes into the communal question at all - Brahman against non-Brahman?** That is a matter we know so well, in Madras.

MR. NEHRU: I do not think the communal question is affected much by caste. In South India, of course, the question of caste comes in, and it has given rise to great bitterness. I was thinking more of Hindus *versus* Muslim. I am not personally acquainted with conditions in the South in recent years, but it used to be more a question of non-Brahman *versus* the vested interest. Taking the depressed classes, they really are the proletariat in the economic sense; the others are the better-off people. All these matters can be converted into economic terms, and then one can understand the position better. *I do not think the Brahman and the non-Brahman question as such is very important now. There is a very large number of non-Brahmans in the Congress. In the Congress the question does not rise. It has some importance in local areas in the South, because of various local factors, but I do not think the question of Brahman and non-Brahman comes into the communal question at all.*

QUESTION: Referring to the present Government of India Act and the possibility of its becoming a transition to

something that India had which could not possibly be given any expression under the present Act and would lead to clashes. **Could Mr. Nehru tell us what, in his opinion, is the way that India should develop in regard to economic arrangements and systems ?**

MR. NEHRU : Whatever I say on this subject will be my own personal view, because I cannot say that India as a whole desires what I desire.

Fundamentally we have to face the land problem chiefly, and the problem of unemployment, which is connected with it. *I think that nothing short of large-scale collectivist or co-operative farming will deal effectively with the land question. These wretched small holdings will then disappear.* Production will greatly increase and many other benefits will follow, but unemployment would not be affected thereby. In fact, by scientific farming, it is possible that unemployment might even increase a little, as far as direct employment on the land is concerned, though indirectly other avenues of employment would be opened up. In order to provide employment we must absorb people in industrial development, in cottage industries, in big machine industries and in the enormous development of the social services, such as education, hygiene and sanitation. There are practically no social services in India to-day. The development of industry and the land would have to be planned as a whole ; it cannot be dealt with in sections. If one tries to tackle one part, one finds something left over which one cannot provide for. The whole basis should be, in my opinion, not the profit motive, but producing for consumption, because if we produce for profit the result is that we simply glut the market ; we cannot sell the goods, because people have no money with which to buy them, and so we get over-production while at the same time many people have nothing at all. We should organise on the Socialist basis and have large-scale agriculture, co-operative or collectivist, big machine industries and cottage industries. The cottage industries must not be such as would be likely to conflict with big industries, because then they would collapse, but I think there will be plenty of room for the growth of cottage industries for a long time to come, simultaneously with the growth of big industries. *If big industries are not developed on a Capitalist basis, they will deal with the essentials which are required and there will be no needless waste of energy.* If all these things are taken together, imagine we might go a little way towards the solution of the various problems that confront us. I

do not see any movement in that direction under present conditions.

QUESTION : You mean something similar to the Soviet system of the organization of industry and agriculture ?

MR. NEHRU : I personally should like to have something similar to that, but I was really envisaging something much less for the moment. *I do not want India to be drilled and forced into a certain position, because the costs of such drilling are too great ; it is not worth while ; it is not desirable from many points of view. I want to go in the direction I have indicated ; I may not be able to go far, but that in the direction in which I want to go. I have expressed my personal view, and I do not speak for India.*

THE CHAIRMAN : I should like to thank Mr. Nehru for the way in which he has dealt with all the questions that have been put to him, and to assure him of our deep interest and gratitude. I hope he will go back to India with the knowledge that there are some people in this country who really do desire not merely to be sympathetic towards India—that is very easy—but to understand the tremendous problems of that great country. We shall watch with interest the events that take place when Mr. Nehru goes back to India, and when he takes up the formidable position of President of the Congress.

## A NOTE ON THE LAND PROBLEM

**Any radical change in the land system, involving large-scale co-operative and collectivist farming, must be preceded or accompanied by the ending of the present zamindari or landlord system wherever it prevails.** The question arises as to whether compensation should be given to the landlords so dispossessed. If the change can be brought about by peaceful and democratic methods, it would be desirable to give some compensation and so avoid a conflict, which is likely to be wasteful and more costly than the compensation itself. But it must be borne in mind that anything in the nature of full compensation is utterly out of the question, especially in so far as the big landlords are concerned. To give such compensation in the shape of bonds would be to mortgage the future of the land and to continue almost the same burden on the peasantry though in another form. Therefore a form of compensation would have to be devised which removed this burden and at the same time lessened the distress and upsetting which a change-over would bring to the landlord

groups. Probably the compensation would be proportionately less higher up in the scale—the middle landlords getting proportionately more than the bigger ones.

It should be remembered that the word 'landlord' is rather a misleading one. In the United Provinces (a zamindari province) there are a million-and-a-half so-called landlords. Probably about 85 per cent. of them are no better than the tenant class, and many are worse off than the better-off tenants. There can be no question of depriving them of anything; they stand in need of further help and of a reduction of their burdens—debt, revenue, etc. Of the remaining 15 per cent., only a tiny fraction of 1 per cent. are really biggish landlords—about 5,000 in all—and about 1,000 of these might be considered the big landlord whose incomes from land vary from about Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 5,000,000 per annum. Those whose incomes run into millions are a mere handful, of course.

During the recent depression and fall in agricultural prices the position of the landlord has steadily deteriorated, and many of the middle landlords are on the verge of bankruptcy. The moneylender holds them as well as the tenants, in his grip. Some recent legislation has slightly eased the position *vis-a-vis* the moneylender, but it does not go nearly far enough.

Apart from the landlord and the tenant, there are large numbers of the landless proletariat, who are largely unemployed or only partially employed during the harvesting and other seasons.

The problem in those parts of India where the zamindari system does not prevail (Punjab, Gujarat, South India) and there is peasant proprietorship, is somewhat different. These peasant proprietors are much better off than the tenants of the zamindari areas, but latterly they have also deteriorated greatly. Behind them again are the landless classes, many of these being the so-called depressed classes.

Questions of compensation and the like arise only when an attempt is made, as it should be made, to have a peaceful change-over from one system to another. In the event of upheavals, brought on by delay in making the necessary changes in time, it is impossible to say how matters will shape themselves.

# CHAPTER XVII

## Science and Progress

**[Jawaharlal Nehru is a fervent champion of science and scientific progress. Although he was given his unqualified co-operation to Mahatma Gandhi in his programme of spinning for independence, he thinks that industrialization is essential for winning independence and making it safe for the coming generations of India. He espoused the scientific cause magnificently in 1938, when Congress Ministries were in the saddle, and the following two short speeches are a thoughtful and thought-provoking resume of his scientifico-socialist inclinations]:**

Most of us unhappily are too much engrossed in the business of politics to pay much attention to the finer and more important aspects of life. That is natural, perhaps, in a nation which struggles for national freedom and to rid itself of the bonds that prevent normal growth. Like a person in the grip of a disease, it can think only of how to gain health again, and this obsession is a barrier to the growth of culture and science. We are entangled in our innumerable problems ; we are oppressed by the appalling poverty of our people But if we had a true standard of values we would realize that the silver jubilee of the Indian Science Congress this year is an event of outstanding importance, for that Congress represents science, and science is the spirit of the age and the dominating factor of the modern world. Even more than the present, the future belongs to science, and to those who make friends with science and seek its help for the advancement of humanity. On this occasion of the silver jubilee I should like to send my greeting to the

Indian Science Congress and to the many distinguished Scientists, our own countrymen and our visitors from abroad, who are assembling in Calcutta. He who has chosen to preside over this Congress Session, had to end his life's journey before he could come here, but that life itself of distinguished service in the cause of science and great achievement has a message for all of us. Though Lord Rutherford is not here, his written word has come to us, and though the courtesy of the editor I have been able to glance through his presidential address.

*Though I have long been a slave driven in the chariot of Indian politics, with little leisure for other thoughts, my mind has often wandered to the days, when as a student I haunted the laboratories of that home of Science—Cambridge. And though circumstances made me part company with science, my thoughts turned to it with longing. In later days through devious processes, I arrived again at science, when I realized that science was not only a pleasant diversion and abstraction but was of the very texture of life, without which our modern world would vanish away. Politics led me to economics and this led me inevitably to science, and the scientific approach to all our problems and to life itself. It was science alone that could solve these problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and literacy, of superstition and deadening custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people.*

I have read, therefore, with interest and appreciation Lord Rutherford's remarks on the role of science in national life, and the need of training and maintaining research workers. And then, I wondered how far all this was possible under our present scheme of things. Something could be done, no doubt even now but how little that is what might and should be done. Lord Rutherford tells us of the need of national planning. I believe that, without such planning, little that is worth while can be done. But can this be done under present conditions, both political and social. At every step vested interests prevent planning and ordered development, and all our energy and enthusiasm is wasted because of this obstruction. Can we plan on a limited scale for limited objectives ? We may do so in some measure, but immediately we come up against new problems and our plans go away. Life is one organic whole, and it cannot be separated into watertight compartments. The Mississippi Valley Committee, writing in their Letter of Transmittal to the Federation Administration of Public Works, U. S. A., refer to this planning business : "Planning for the use and control of water is planning of most of the basic functions of life of a nation.

We cannot plan for water unless we also reconsider the relevant problems of the land. We cannot plan for water and land unless we plan for the whole people. It is of little use to control rivers unless we also master the condition which made for the security and freedom for the human life.

And so we are driven back to think of these basic conditions of human life, of the social system, the economic structure. If science is the dominating factor in modern life, then the social system and economic structure must fit in with science or it is doomed. Lord Rutherford tells of the need for co-operation between the Scientist and the Industrialist. That need is obvious. So also is the need for co-operation between the Scientist and the Politician.

I am entirely in favour of a state organization of research. I would also like the state to send out promising Indian students in large numbers to foreign countries for scientific and technical training. For we have to build India on a scientific foundation, to develop her industries, to change that feudal character of her land system, and bring her agriculture in line with modern methods to develop the social services, which she lacks so utterly to-day, and to do so many other things that shout out to be done. For all this we require a trained personnel.

I should like our Central and Provincial Governments to have expert boards to investigate our problems and suggest solutions. A politician dislikes and sometimes suspects the scientist and the expert. But without that expert's aid that politician can do little.

And so, I hope, with Lord Rutherford, "that in the days to come, India will again become the home of science, not only as a form of intellectual activity but also as a means of furthering the progress of her people."

**In the course of his address to National Academy of the sciences, at their annual meeting held in Allahabad in 1938, Nehru said :—**

You are men of learning, and many of you have distinguished records in the realm of science. Yet you have honoured me, an outsider, with an invitation to participate in this annual gathering of yours and I have most willingly accepted that invitation. Science and academic halls have not known me for many a long year, and fate and circumstances have led me to the dust and din of the market-place,

and the field and the factory, where men live and toil and suffer. I have become involved in the great human upheavals that have shaken this land of ours in recent years. Yet in spite of the tumult and movement that have surrounded me, I do not come to you wholly as a stranger. For I too have worshipped at the shrine of science and counted myself as one of its votaries.

*Who indeed can afford to ignore science to-day. At every turn we have to seek its aid, and the whole fabric of the world to-day is of its making. During the ten thousand years of human civilisation, science came in with one vast sweep a century and a half ago, and during these 150 years it proved more revolutionary and explosive than anything that had gone before. We who live in this age of science live in an environment and under conditions which are totally different from those of the pre-scientific age. But few realize this in its completeness, and they seek to understand the problems of to-day by a reference to a yesterday that is dead and gone.*

We have vast problems to face and to solve. They will not be solved by the politician alone, for they may not have the vision or the expert knowledge ; they will not be solved by the scientists alone, for they will not have the power to do so or the larger outlook which takes everything into its ken. They can and will be solved by the co-operation of the two defined and definite social objective.

That objective is necessary, for without it our efforts are vain and trivial and lack co-ordination. We have seen in Soviet Russia how a consciously held objective, backed by a co-ordinated effort can change a backward country into an advanced, industrial state with an ever-rising standard of living. Some such method we shall have to pursue if we are to make rapid progress.

The greatest of our problems is that of the land, but intimately connected with it is that of Industry. And side by side with these go the social services. All of these will have to be tackled together and co-ordinated together. This is a vast undertaking, but it will have to be shouldered.

Soon after the formation of Congress Ministries, in August last, the Working Committee of the Congress passed a resolution which should interest scientists and experts. I should like, therefore, to draw your attention to it. It ran thus :

*"The Working Committee recommends to the Congress Ministries the appointment of a Cammittee of Experts to consider urgent and vital problems, the solution of which is necessary to any scheme of national reconstruction and social planning. Such solution will require extensive surveys and the collection of data as well as clearly-defined social objective. Many of these problems cannot be dealt with effectively on a provincial basis and the interests of adjoining provinces are interlinked. Comprehensive river surveys are necessary for the formulation of a policy to prevent disastrous floods, to utilize the water for purposes of irrigation, to consider the problem of soil erosion, to eradicate malaria, and for the development of hydro-electric and other schemes. For this purpose, the whole river valleys will have to be surveyed and investigated, and large-scal state planning resorted to. The development and control of industries require also joint and co-ordinated action on the part of several provinces. The Working Committee advises, therefore, that to begin with an inter-Provincial Committee of Experts be appointed to consider the general nature of the problems to be faced, and to suggest how and in what order these should be tackled. The Expert Committee may suggest the formation of special committee or boards to consider each such problem separately and to advise the Provincial Governments concerned as to the joint action to be undertaken."*

The rest of resolution dealt with the sugar industry. Something has been done in this latter respect, a Power, Alcohol and other Committees have been appointed, but I wish more had been done. I should like an aggressive and wide-spread tackling of our problems by experts. I should like Museums and permanent exhibitions for the education of our masses, especially the peasantry, to grow up in every district. I remember the wonderful Peasant Museums I saw in the U. S. S. R. and compare them with pitiful agricultural exhibitions that are organised here from time to time. I also remember vividly that splendid and astonishing museum, the Deutsches Museum at Munich, and wonder rather wistfully when some such thing will grow up in India.

It is for this Academy of Sciences to take a lead in all such matters and to advise the Government thereon. The Government should co-operate with them and help them, and take full advantage of their expert knowledge. But the Academy must not just wait for the Government to take the initiative in everything. It is the business of the Government to take the initiative, but it is also the business of the scientists to take the initiative themselves. We cannot wait for each other. We must get a move on.

And so, having taken up so much of your time, I commend you to your labours, and hope that you will have the privilege of serving India and of helping in the progress and advancement of her people.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

# Beyond our Frontiers

**[In this short speech delivered on the eve of Second World War, Jawaharlal declares that the people of India are profoundly interested in international affairs, but Indian Nationalism is entirely different from the aggressive nationalism of dictatorial countries. Independent India will be a shoulder of strength to the feltering powers of democracy, and it is in the interest of Britain that India should be an independent and powerful country.]**

Nationalism is in ill odour to-day in the West, and has become the parent of aggressiveness, intolerance and brutal violence. All that is reactionary seeks shelter under that name—Fascism, Imperialism, race bigotry and the crushing of that free spirit of inquiry which gave the semblance of greatness to Europe in the nineteenth century. Culture succumbs before its onslaught and civilisation decays. Democracy and freedom are its pet aversions and in its name innocent men, women and children in Spain are bombed to death, and fierce race persecution takes place. Yes it was Nationalism that built up the nations of Europe a hundred years or more ago and provided the background for that civilisation whose end seems to be drawing near. And it is Nationalism which is the driving force to-day in the countries of the East which suffer under foreign domination and seek freedom. To them it brings unity and vitality and a lifting of the burdens of the spirit which subjection entails. There is a virtue in it up to a certain stage; till then it is a progressive force adding to human freedom.

But even then it is a narrowing creed and a nation seeking freedom, like a person who is sick can think of little besides its own struggle and its own misery.

India has been no exception to this rule, and often in the intensity of her struggle, she has forgotten the world and thought only in terms of herself. But as strength came to her and confidence born of success she began to look beyond her frontiers. The increasing interest she has taken in the problems of the world is a measure of the growth of her nationalist movement.

*Perhaps nothing is so surprising in India to-day as this anxious interest in foreign affairs and the realisation that her own struggle for freedom is a part of the world struggle. And this interest is by no means confined to the intelligentsia, but goes deep down to the worker, the petty shopkeeper and even to a small extent to the peasant. The invasion of Manchuria by Japan caused a wave of sympathy for China ; and Japan, which had so far been popular with Indians, began to be disliked. The rape of Abyssinia by Italy was deeply felt and resented. The tragic events of Central Europe produced profound impression. But most of all India felt, almost as a personal sorrow, the revolt against the Republic of Spain and the invasion of China, with all their attendant horrors. Thousands of demonstrations were held in favour of Spain and China and out of our poverty we extended our helping hand to them in the shape of food and medical missions.*

This reaction in India was not due primarily to humanitarian reasons, but to growing realisation of the significance of the conflicts in the world, and to an intelligent self-interest. We saw in Fascism the mirror of the Imperialism from which he had suffered, and in the growth of Fascism we saw defeat for freedom and democracy, for which we struggled with our long experience of British Imperialism, we distrusted the assurance so often given, of British support of collective security of League of Nations.

Because of this we followed, perhaps with greater clarity than elsewhere, the development of British foreign policy towards co-operation with the Fascist Powers, and our opposition to British Imperialism became a part of our opposition to all Imperialism and Fascism.

"To this British foreign policy we were entirely opposed and yet as parts of the empire, we were bound by it. By resolution, and public declaration we dissociated ourselves from it, and endeavoured in such ways as were open to us to

develop our foreign policy. The medical mission that we sent to China or the foodstuffs that went from India to Spain were our methods of asserting our foreign policy and dissociating ourselves from that of Britain. We laid down further our line of action in the event of World War breaking out. It was for the people of India to determine whether India would join a war or not, and any decision imposed upon us by Britain would be resisted. Nor were we prepared on any account to permit our resources to be exploited for an imperialist war.

**The Indian nationalist movement has stood for many years for full independence and severance of our tie with the British Empire. Recent events in Europe have made this an urgent necessity for us. We must control our foreign policy, our finances and our defences, and have perfect freedom to develop our own contacts with our countries.**

Foreign affairs are thus casting their long shadow over the Indian national struggle, and the growing consciousness of this makes India look at the world with an ever-increasing interest. She thinks of the day, which may not be long distant when she will be a free country, and already she prepares mentally for that change. The British Empire is fading away before our eyes, and everyone knows that it cannot hold India in subjection for long. Responsible statesmen in England no doubt realize this, and yet it is exceedingly difficult for them to give up the assumptions and mental atmosphere of a century ago, and adapt themselves to what logic tells them is the inevitable end.

*That is the dilemma of Britain to-day. There are only two courses open to her in regard to India. The natural and the logical course is to recognise what must be and adapt herself gracefully to it. This means the immediate recognition of India's right to self-determination on the basis of complete freedom, and the drawing up of India's constitution by a Constituent Assembly consisting of her elected representatives. Such a decision and immediate steps taken to implement it, would immediately bring about a psychological change, and the old atmosphere of conflict and hostility would give place to a spirit of co-operation. India, achieving her independence in this way would not look unfavourably to certain privileges in the matter of trade and commerce being granted to Britain. She might even accept certain financial burdens which injustice should not fall on her. We would be willing to pay this price for freedom with pleasure, for the cost of conflict wil in any event be much greater. Ind.a would also be a friend anld*

*colleague in world affairs, provided Britain stood for freedom and demorcracy.*

The other course is to keep India in subjection and attempt to impose vital decisions on her. This would inevitably lead to a major conflict with Indian nationalism. It might delay Indian freedom for a while, but certainly it would not delay it for very long ; and it is possible that the conflict itself might precipitate matters. It was no easy matter for the British Government to suppress the last civil disobedience movement. To-day the Congress and the National Movement are far stronger than they have ever been, and Britain, on the other hand, thanks to Mr. Chamberlain's policy, is dangerously near to impatience in foreign affairs. That does not mean that Britain cannot strike hard at India. She can certainly do so, but it will be a very difficult task to undertake, and if international crisis intervenes as it might, it will be a perilous one. It is not surprising, therefore, that the British Government have no desire whatever to force a conflict in India. They would welcome a settlement with the National Congress. This, if it genuinely attempted, and is to be successful, means facing up to all the implications of the first two courses outlined above. British Imperialism by its very nature is unable to do this. The British Government will, therefore, at all costs, avoid the first course.

That is the dilemma and there is no middle course except one of marking time. But time runs fast in this age of dictators, and events follow one another with a startling rapidity. At any moment the edifice of "appeasement", which Mr. Chamberlain has built up so laboriously even at the cost of what nations and individuals hold most dear, might collapse and bring catastrophe. What of India then? What will India do? That is the question that often worries British statesmen. For it will matter a great deal what India does. India will make a difference.

# CHAPTER XIX

## The Romance of Independence Day

**[Even among the most sordid surroundings, Jawaharlal does not forget the essential cheerfulness of human struggle. There is a touch of light and loveliness about Nehru's message on Independence Day, January 1939. He relished the taking of the pledge in the Pushto language, of which he had picked up a few words, and the good company of the brave Pathans ; that was in 1938. Next year he was in Almora, "another frontier district of India" bordering on Tibet, as Peshawar borders on Afghanistan. Thus, Jawaharlal had the unique honour of presiding over Independence Day Celebrations in two successive years on two different frontiers of India.]**

A year ago I stood in Bannu Town 'Independence Day', surrounded by a host of Khudai Khidmatgars and other men of the Frontier. We took the pledge together, and as was fitting, we took it in the Pushtu language. I had picked up a few words of this language during my Frontier tour, and I tried to repeat the pledge, word by word, together with the assembled multitude. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, that gaunt and well-beloved figure of the North, was the leader of this solemn chorus, and above our heads floated proudly the National Flag, emblem of that independence to which we pledged ourselves.

That day Khan Sahib took me to many other towns and villages, and everywhere this solemn and significant ceremony was repeated and the pledge taken. The memory of that day clings to me and the earnest Pathan faces, taking that vow of freedom, form an unforgettable picture in my mind.

**To them it was no empty ritual, no ceremony without inner meaning, but a vital real thing, symbolizing the long suppressed desire of these hearts, which found some expression in words of promise and power. Thus we sealed our bond of brotherhood in the great cause of India's freedom.**

To-day I take the pledge again in another frontier district of India, for Almora, though nearer to the heart of India, is yet one of the frontiers of this country bordering on Tibet and Nepal. Another multitude gathers together from the distant valleys and the mountain tops, peasant folk from the border land of Askote, a week's journey from here, and men and women from this ancient town of the eternal snows, to take the pledge of Independence.

Eight years have passed since we took this pledge for the first time, years heavy with sorrow for us and struggle, but also with a measure of triumph and achievement. But though success has come to us, we know its meagre worth, and the promised land has yet to be reached when this pledge of ours will redeem itself.

And the World War rages in the Far East and in Spain to the accompaniment of incredible and inhuman atrocities, and the black night of reaction covers Europe. Multitudes, tortured beyond endurance, become refugees and wander from one country to another, seeking home and shelter and finding none.

*What then does our pledge mean to us to-day, what significance does it have? Has it grown stale and meaningless through too much repetition, or is it still the vital spark of old which fired us to action and brave endeavour? Have we grown tired and complacent, tied by offices and the petty routine of administration, thinking in terms of compromise? Have we forgotten that we still form part of a slave empire which exploits us and keeps us embedded in dire poverty, and which strangles freedom wherever in this world it fights for breath? Is it in this Empire that we will find redemption of our pledge?*

There are some amongst us, whose memory is of the shortest, who have already forgotten the pledge they took and the many brave resolutions that they made. But we do not forget and we will not allow others to forget. We have pledged ourselves to win full independence, to put an end to imperialism in India, to sever our connection with the Empire that encircles us. By that pledge we stand.

We stand by it even more than we did eight years ago, for that Empire has added to its sins by the butchery of democracy and freedom in Central Europe and Spain, and the crushing of the Arab people in Palestine. We will not forget this and fight against it in war or peace. We shall fight this policy which hands over the world to lascism.

*We stand by that pledge even more to-day because we have seen what petty change has come to us by provincial autonomy, and how imperialism still sits entrenched in the citadels. We see how India's will is repeatedly ignored in the interests of British finance and industry. We see from day to day the employment of British power to crush the people of the state. Rampura is a wilderness to-day, and armed troops gather there from distant parts of India in order to terrorize the people of the Orissa State. In Jaipur, an English Prime Minister dares to challenge not only the people of the State but the Congress organization itself, a challenge that will be accepted. Everywhere it isbecoming apparent, the struggle in the States is not with the helpless rulers but with the grim might of British Imperialism.*

Is this the way in which the British Government seeks the co-operation of the nationalist movement in the provincial autonomy and endeavours to prepare ground for federation? We have had enough of this foolery and the sooner it is ended the better.

The time has gone by for empty and misleading tasks. We are up against the hard realities of the situation, and the pledge we take to-day tells us what path we have to tread and what our inevitable goal is. There is going to be no federation except a federation of a free India. To think or talk in other terms is to betray our pledge and to dishonour ourselves and our cause.

**There will be no federation, and the provincial autonomy of to-day must itself fade away and give place to an independent India, a bulwark of democracy and freedom opposing fascism and imperialism alike. That is the meaning of the pledge.**

And so we take the pledge, realizing its full significance and preparing ourselves for all that it involves. There is no peace or quiet for us or anyone else in the world to-day. We have to keep our knapsacks on our backs and be ready for the order to march. The people of Europe, in the vicious grip of fascism and its allies, the Governments of England and France, stumble helplessly and seek in vain a path through the darkness that envelopes them. But our path is clear.

## CHAPTER XX

# On the Horns of Dilemma

**[Three months before the outbreak of Second World War, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru granted a special interview to the representative of the *Times of India* on May 3, 1939. Jawaharlal Nehru had prophetically visioned the dreadful foot of war treading heavily in the shades of summer. He told the public that the people of India stood on the horns of dilemma, between the Scylla of fascism and Charybidis of imperialism. How can India fight for the freedom of England with having her own ? And yet how could India help fighting against the hordes of fascism ?]**

*A certain seeming contradiction arises in regard to our policy towards war. On the one hand we are anti-Fascists and we think that a Fascist world victory will be not only disastrous for the world as a whole but bad for our own freedom. Therefore, inevitably, we do not want a Fascist.*

*On the other hand supporting British Imperialism is obviously a wrong policy for a country dominated by that imperialism. The contradiction really does not lie in our approach to the question. If we think of the question in terms of a free India, obviously we are led to the conclusion that we should support the forces of Democracy as opposed to Fascism. If we think in terms of a subject India, we are le d to the conclusion that we cannot support dominating Imperialism. The conflict is resolved when the subjection is removed and a free India can choose h er own policy in regard to war and peace as well as other matters.*

Then again, even apart from this, to imagine that the present British Government is a chamoion of democracy is a

difficult undertaking. If it was in favour of real democracy, its first function should be to introduce democracy in its empire. The mere fact of not doing so and resisting it is sufficient evidence that it is not democracy which it seeks but the perpetuation of its imperialism.........."

Pandit Nehru asked whether, granting all that he had said, India would not stand heavily to lose in the event of Britain going under in a life-and-death struggle with totalitarianism unaided by friends of democracy, replied:

"India as well as the rest of the world certainly stands to suffer greatly if Fascism dominates the world. India does not suffer alone, if British Imperialism fades away. The suggestion that England would prefer defeat rather than a fair deal to the empire and a liquidation of her Imperialism is itself significant. All the major questions in the world to-day, whether those of Europe or the Far East, political or economic, fascist or imperialist, are tied up, and it is difficult to consider one without the other. The question of Indian freedom is not only intimately related to these other questions, but in a sense is a crucial one, having a tremendous bearing on the solution of the other question. To establish Indian independence leads inevitably to the ending of British Imperialism and to England becoming a really democratic front against Fascism. That is the real answer to Herr Hittler's demand for colonies. The struggle with Fascism then is a straight one."

**"Therefore, for British statesmen to try to keep the question of Indian independence apart from the other issues, is to seek to evade the crux of the question and by seeking a seeming temporary advantage to injure the cause of democracy and of England...... "**

# CHAPTER XXI

# Congress, League and War

**[It was the Viceroy of India who declared war on behalf of India. The Indian people had no voice in deciding the issue. The Indian National Congress, in consistence with its policy, strongly protested against the action of the British Government. The Muslim League, directly in contradiction with its resolution on independence, supported War, and helped John Bull to tighten its grip on the Indian masses. This speech of Jawaharlal will be remembered long after India has attained independence, because it embodies the heroic stand taken by the Congress in the face of overwhelming odds.]**

The Congress Working Committee's statement of September 14 clarified the whole position, crystallizing nationalist opinion and giving clear expression to it. That statement immediately evoked a remarkable response in India. What innumerable people had been feeling vaguely in their minds and hearts was clarified and put down in stately language. Doubts were resolved, many a perplexity vanished, for it seemed that the people of India had found voice and pointed to the world the inevitable path which had to be followed if our present-day problems were to be solved. And the world listened.

The progressive in England hailed it; in democratic America it received considerable publicity; even in war-ridden Europe it evoked a response. People of suppressed and subject nations saw in it a charter for the oppressed. It was in tune with the spirit of the times.

All that has happened since then has been a logical development of that invitation of the Congress Working

Committee for a clarification of war aims. Lord Zetland's speech after A. I. C. C. meeting, the Viceroy's statement, the Muslim League's resolutions in the Provincial Assemblies, and the inevitable resignations of the Congress Ministries have all followed each other in ordered sequence, throwing a flood of light on the Indian scene.

*What does this light show ? First of all, the high statesmanship and wisdom of the Congress, which stands justified to-day before India and the world. Holding to its ideals and its previous declarations, it has applied them to changing and difficult circumstances, and thus demonstrated that it has the capacity to be idealistic and practical at the same time. The freedom of India, for which it stands, has been woven into the larger picture of world freedom and war and peace aims and a practical solution offered for the world's ills.*

Secondly, the true nature of this war has become evident. The reply of the British Government to the Congress shows beyond a doubt that they are moved now, as before by a desire to preserve their imperialist interests. This is no democratic war in which the forces of democracy are ranged on one side against the forces of Nazism and reaction on the other. True, there are some democratic forces, on the side of the Allies, but the governments that control the destinies of England and France, are the old discredited governments which must bear responsibility for the present unhappy state of Europe.

We cannot forget Munich and Spain. To-day the French Government is a citadel of reaction, and need we say more about the British Government than that Mr. Neville Chamberlain is still (1939) the Prime Minister ? We knew all this and yet it was necessary that all doubt should be removed from the minds of the people and that reality should emerge out of the fog of war.

The reality has come and it is not beautiful to look at and not all the fine phrasing of Sir Samuel Hoare can rejuvenate the aged and the decrepit. Imperialism is a tottering structure to-day, wholly out of place in modern conditions, but the British ruling class will think in its terms and seek to preserve it. They are even afraid to make a clear declaration about India's freedom. This Imperialism is not in love with the minorities or even the Princes (though it utilizes both to serve its main purpose) ; it is mainly concerned with British financial and other vested interests in India. "It is an axiom of Indian politics that there can be no compromise between Imperialism and Indian Nationalism and freedom.

Whatever the phase of our struggle that hostility has persisted. The Congress offer was that Imperialism should be ended, the Independence of India recognised, and this age-long hostility should give place to friendship and co-operation. That offer has been rejected and we go our separate ways till fate or circumstances unite us again.

Thirdly, the position of the Muslim League has been cleared up beyond any possibility of misunderstanding. We had welcomed the League's acceptance of Independence as its objective three years ago and the widening of the basis of its membership. But we were soon to realize that the old politically reactionary outlook held the field still. Under cover of communal propaganda, the Muslim masses were prevented from realizing this. We are not for the moment discussing the communal demands of the League. They may be right or wrong. It is conceivable for a person to be a communalist and yet an ardent believer in political freedom, though at some stage or other, a conflict will arise between these two loyalties. The Congress has often erred in the petty issues of politics, but it has always shown an unerring instinct whenever a major issue arose. The League, on the other hand, has a remarkable record of being wrong on the major issues, though it may occasionally be right on some trivial matter.

**It is a tragedy that at this supreme crisis in our national history the League should have sided with full-blooded reaction. We do not believe that many of its own members agree with this attitude. We are certain that the Muslim masses are firm adherents of Indian freedom. In some communal matters the League may represent them, but it certainly does not do so in matters political.**

## INDIA'S DEFENCE

A war policy for a nation must inevitably first take into consideration the defence of the country. India must feel that she is taking part in her own defence and in preserving her own freedom as well as helping in the struggle for freedom elsewhere. The army will have to be considered a National Army, and not a mercenary force owing allegiance to someone else. It is on this national basis that recruitment should take place, so that our soldiers should not merely be cannon-fodder but fighters for their country and for freedom.

In addition to this it will be necessary to have a large-scale organisation for Civil Defence on a militia basis. All this can be done by a popular government.

*Even more important is the development of Industries to supply war and other needs. Industries must develop on a vast scale in India during the war-time. They must not be allowed to grow in a haphazard way, but should be planned and controlled in the national interest and with due safeguards for workers. The National Planning Committee can be of great assistance in this work.*

As the war progresses and consumes more and more commodities, planned production and distribution will be organised over the world, and gradually a world-planned economy will appear. The capitalist system will recede into the background. and it may be that international control of Industry will take its place. India, as an important producer must have a say in any such control.

Finally, India must speak as a free nation at the Peace Conference. We have endeavoured to indicate what the War and Peace aims of those who speak for democracy should be and in particular how they should be applied to India. The list is not exhaustive, but it is solid foundation to build upon, and an incentive for the great efforts needed. We have not touched upon the problem of a re-organisation of the world after the war, though we think some such re-organisation essential and inevitable.

**Will the statesmen and peoples of the world, and especially of the warring countries, be wise and far-seeing enough to follow the path we have pointed out ? We do not know. But here in India, let us forget our differences, our Leftism and Rightism, and think of these vital problems that face us and insistently demand solution. The world is pregnant with possibilities. It has no pity at any time for the weak or the ineffective or the dis-united. To-day when nations fight desperately for survival, only those who are far-seeing and disciplined and united in action will play a role in the history that is being made.**

# CHAPTER XXII

# India and China

**[India's love for China and China's love for India may be compared to the bond of affection that persists between two ailing brothers, sickened and starved by younger generations, in the comity of nations. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a fervent champion of Chinese freedom as Madame Chiang Kai-shek is an enthusiastic supporter of India's independence. The following statement was issued by Pandit Nehru to prepare the public for a cordial reception to President Tai Chi Tao, who came to participate in Eastern Group Conference held at Delhi in November 1940. This sincere utterance is remarkable for its touching appeal. The reader will realize that Pandit Nehru has a Chinese soul in an Indian body.] :—**

President Tai Chi Tao is due to arrive in Calcutta by air from Rangoon on or about November 3, and he intends to spend about six weeks in India. We can assure him on behalf of the Indian people of a very warm welcome for many reasons. He comes as a representative of a great people and of a country struggling with amazing heroism for her freedom. That in itself would make him welcome here. He comes as an eminent scholar, deeply interested in the cultural contacts between India and China during the past ages. We understand that he is particularly desirous of visiting the historical places connected with the Buddhist faith in India, as well as other cultural centres of this country. He comes also on a mission of good-will to

this country, and as a symbol of the growing friendship between India and China.

The friendship is very precious to us, not only because of the thousands of golden links that have bound us in the past but because of the future that beckons to both of us. *The present is full of difficulty for all of us and none may avoid this sorrow and travail. But the future that is taking shape in death and disaster will be a future in which India and China are bound to play a great part.* This will be so not just because of the huge collections of human beings which inhabit these two countries, amounting to two-fifths or possibly nearly half of the entire population of the world. There is something much more than the weight of numbers involved in this although numbers may not be ignored.

*India and China have represented throughout the ages the distinct and deep-rooted civilisations and cultures, each very different from the other and yet with numerous common features. Like all ancient countries, they have gathered round them all manner of debris in the form of old custom and tradition which hinder growth, but underneath this mess of useless material there lies the pure gold that has kept them going for all these ages. Not all the degradation and misfortunes that have befallen both India and China have melted this golden love which made them great in the past and which even to-day gives stature to them.*

For many years now, and more especially for the last three years and more, China has been going through the ordeal of fire. How can we measure the immeasurable suffering of the Chinese people, invaded and attacked by an Imperialist aggressor, bombed in their cities night after night and made to face all the horrors of modern war by a first-rate power. **London has suffered greatly from bombing during the last two or three months. But what of Chung-king that has had to face this bombing for years now, and yet lives ?** We cannot measure this suffering nor can we measure the determination of epic courage which has faced these disasters and sufferings unmoved and unbent. In the magnificent story of the Chinese people from the dawn of history to this day there are many glorious periods and fine deeds. But surely the past three years will stand out even in that great record. These years have been years of swift transition from the past to the present and preparation for the future that is to come. The dross and debris are being burned away in the fire of a nation suffering and the pure metal comes

out. We, in India, have had our own share of trials and tribulations and are likely to have much more of it in the near future. So nations who are slothful and who have sunk into subjection are made again. So China and India are being rejuvenated.

Both of them have a great part to play in the future ; so let both hold together and learn from each other. We welcome again President Tai Chi Tao to this ancient land and trust that his visit will bear rich fruit in bringing the two peoples nearer to each other.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

# Nationalism Faces Imperialism

**[This extract from Jawaharlal Nehru's statement at his trial held in Gorakhpur Prison on November 3, 1940, is reminder of the Individual Satyagraha launched by Mahatma Gandhi to oppose Britain's war efforts. In this speech Jawaharlal " the symbol of nationalism " lucidly explains to the prosecution judge " the symbol of imperialism" why the British Government has no right to drag India into the war without consulting the representatives of the Indian people.]**

### LIQUIDATING IMPERIALISM

It is not my intention to give details of the many errors and mistakes in these reports. That would mean rewriting them completely. That would waste your time, sir, and mine and would- serve little purpose. I am not here to defend myself, and perhaps, what I say in this statement, will make your task easier. I do not yet know the exact nature of the charge against me. I gather that it has something to do with the Defence of India Rules and that it relates to my reference to war and to the attempts being made to compel the people of India not to take part in the war effort. If that is so, I shall gladly admit the charge. It is not necessary to go to garbled reports to find out what I or other Congressmen say in regard to India and the war. The

Congress resolutions and statements, carefully and precisely-worded, are there for all the world to know. By those resolutions and statements I stand, and I consider it my duty to take the message of the Congress to the people of India.

If I was chosen, or if before me Shri Vinoba Bhave was chosen for this purpose, it was not to give expression to our individual views. We were symbols who spoke the mind of India in the name of India, or, at any rate, of a vast number of people of India. **As individuals we may have counted for little, but as such symbols and representatives of the Indian people we counted for a great deal. In the name of those people we asserted their right to freedom and to decide for themselves what they should do and what they would not do ; we challenged the right of any other authority, by whomsoever constituted, to deprive them of this right and to force its will upon them.** No individual or group of individuals, not deriving authority from the Indian people and not responsible to them in any way, should impose their will upon them and thrust the hundreds of millions of India, without any reference to them or their representatives, into a mighty war which was none of their seeking. It was amazing and full of significance that this should be done in the name of freedom and self-determination and democracy, for which it was alleged the war was being waged.

## WE WILL NO LONGER BE SLAVES

We were slow in coming to our final conclusions ; we hesitated and parlayed, we sought a way out honourable to all the parties concerned. We failed, and the inevitable conclusion was forced upon us that, so far as the British Government or their representatives were concerned, we were still looked upon as chattel to do their will and to continue to be exploited in their imperialist structure ; that was a position which we could never tolerate, whatever the consequence.

*There are very few persons in India, I suppose, whether they are Indian or Englishmen, who have for years past so consistently raised their voice against Fascism and Nazism as I have done. My whole nature rebelled against them, and on many an occasion I vehemently criticized the pro-Fascist and appeasement policy of the British Government. Ever since the invasion of Manchuria, and subsequently in Abyssinia, Central Europe, Spain and China, I saw with pain and anguish how country after country was betrayed in the name of this appeasement*

*and how the lamps of liberty were being put out. I realized that imperialism, or else its own ideological foundations were weakened. It had to choose between this liquidating itself in favour of democratic feeedom. There was no middle way.*

So long as appeasement applied to Manchuria, Abyssinia, Zecho-Slovakia, Spain and Albania, to "far-away countries about which few people had ever heard," as the then Prime Minister of England put it, did not matter much and was faithfully pursued. But when it came nearer home and threatend the British Empire itself the clash came and war began.

Again there were two alternatives before the British Government and each Government engaged in the war, to continue to function in the old imperialist way or to end this in their domains and become the leaders of the urge for freedom and revolutionary change the world over. They chose the former, though they still talked in terms of freedom and it was even in words limited to Europe and evidently meant freedom to carry on with their Empire in the old way. Not even peril and disaster have weakened their intention to hold on to their Empire and enforce their will upon subject people.

In India we have had a year of war government. The people's elected Legislatures have been suspended and ignored, and a greater and more widespread autocracy prevails here than anywhere else in the world. Recent measures have suppressed completely such limited freedom as the press possessed to give facts and opinions. If this is the prelude to the freedom that is promised us, or to the "New Order" about which so much is said, then we can well imagine what the later stages will be when England emerges as a full-blooded Fascist State.

**This war has led already to widespread destruction and will lead to even greater horror and misery. With those who suffer we sympathize deeply and in all sincerity. But unless the war has a revolutionary aim of ending the present order and substituting something based on freedom and co-operation, it will lead to a continuation of war and utmost destruction.**

## WHY WE MUST DISSOCIATE

That is why we must dissociate ourselves from this war and advise our people to do likewise and not help in any way with money or men. That is our bounden duty. But

even apart from this, the treatment accorded to the Indian people during the past year by the British authorities, the latter's attempt to encourage every disruptive and reactionary tendency, their forcible realization of money for the war from even the poor of India and their repeated effronts to Indian nationalism, are such that we can never forget or ignore. No self-respecting people can tolerate such behaviour and the people of India have no intention of tolerating it. *I stand before you, Sir, as an individual being tried for certain offences against the State. You are a symbol of that State. But I am something more than an individual also ; I, too, am a symbol at the present moment, a symbol of Indian nationalism, resolved to break away from the British Empire and achieve the Independence of India. It is not me that you are seeking to judge and condemn, but rather the hundred of millions of the people of India, and that is a large task even for a proud Empire. Perhaps it may be that, though I am standing before you on my trial, it is the British Empire itself that is on its trial before the bar of the world.* There are more powerful forces at work in the world to-day than courts of law, there are elemental urges for freedom and food and security which are moving vast masses of the people, and history is being moulded by them. The future recorder of this history might well say that in hour of supreme trial the Government of Britain and the people of Britain failed because they could not adapt themselves to a changing world. He may muse over the fate of empire which has always fallen because of this weakness and call it destiny. Certain causes inevitably produce certain results. We know the causes, the results are inexorably in their train.

## CHAPTER XXIV

# Can Indians Get Together ?

**[The following message cabled to the "New York Times" Magazine of America by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in July 1942 seeks to answer the charges of disunity brought by the British Rulers against the Indian people in support of their reluctance to part with political power. After a careful and convincing analysis of the present problems of India, Nehru asserts that Indian unity is not only possible but a dead certainty only if interested interference from outside in her internal affairs ceases to exist.]**

Can Indians get together ? It is an odd title yet a significant one, for it tells us much in four words. It gives us an intimate and revealing glimpse into the minds of those who framed it. It reveals to us the premises and assumptions on which they base their consideration of the Indian problem. It displays that patronizing superiority of outlook which we have come to associate with westerners when they deal with Eastern nations. It has something of the white man's burden about it.

Because of all this, I was disinclined to write on this subject, for there is little room for argument or reasoning when premises differ. **Our minds function in set grooves, and if even the impact of a world war with its attendant revolutionary changes does not pull them out from those deep hollows, how much can we expect from an appeal to reason ?**

This war is a stupendous military spectacle, and all over the world armies, navies and air forces clash with each other and seek to gain the mastery. These mighty conflicts already

have changed the shape of the world and will undoubtedly still further change the shape of things to come. And yet greater changes are happening in the minds of men, possibly none so great as those invisible things that are affecting Asia and gradually but surely putting an end to the relations between Asia and Europe that subsisted for 200 years. However this war may develop, whatever the end may be, what even the peace is going to be, it is certain that the Western World can no longer dominate over Asia. If this is not realized and if the attempt is made to continue the old relationship in any form, this means the end of the peace and another disastrous conflict.

Yet this is not realized by those who shape the policies of western nations, least of all by Britain. The France of Vichy, grovelling before Germany, still talks of the French Empire; the Netherlands, having lost already many of her vast possessions, still speaks the offensive language of empire and endeavours to cling to what is left. The nineteenth century is dead and gone but the minds of Britain's rulers still think in terms of that dead past. That way lies no hope for the world or for the peace that must inevitably come sometime or other. Unless London and Washington begin to think in terms of to-day and of free and equal Asia, they will never reach a solution of the problems that confront them.

That solution lies in accepting the fact of full and equal freedom for all the countries of Asia, of giving up the doctrine of racial superiority, which is no monopoly of the Nazis. It lies in the recognition of Indian independence, which will not only release the suppressed and pent-up energies of a great nation but will be symbolic of a new freedom all over the world.

**What a mess the nations of Europe made of this world with their perpetual conflicts, their eternal hates, their grabbing violence and cut-throat opportunism, with the misery they brought to their colonial territories, with two world wars in the course of a single generation!**

Not being able to look after their own houses, they presume to dominate over others and pose as their mentors. But no one values them at their achievements in science, literature or the application of science. Behind all this there is a lack of something which brings their achievements periodically to nought. Asia has looked at this hanging scene with the strength of ages behind her, and the past 200 years,

with all their suffering and mortification, are but a brief interlude in her long history.

That interlude is over. A new chapter must begin. Asia is learning rapidly what the West has to teach of science and its applications and is trying to harmonize them with her old-time genius. She has little to learn, much to teach about the philosophy of life and the art of living.

*Can the Indians get together ? Yes, certainly, if impediments in their way created by foreign authority are removed, if they can face their problems without external interference. Every problem finally will be solved either by peaceful means or by conflict, though this may give rise to new problems. Independent India will solve her problems or cease to be. The past history of India shows us she has successfully tackled her problems and out of every conflict of opposing forces had produced a new synthesis. Synthesis is a dominant trait of India's civilization and history.*

Except for China, there is no great country in the world which has shown such powerful unity throughout the ages as India. That unity took political shape only rarely as it could not be stabilized until relatively recent developments in transport and communications made this easy. If these developments had not taken place it is possible that the United States of America might not have been a single nation.

Britain's rule over India led to political unity and also was a means to bring the industrial revolution to India. Development of that revolution was, however, hindered by the British, who encouraged feudal elements and prevented industrial growth. The continuing process of synthesis also was stopped by this rule and disruptive forces were encouraged.

For the first time in India's history, here was the rule of a foreign people who had their cultural roots elsewhere and who could only remain as foreigners exploiting the country for their own advantage. There could be no synthesis with them, and perpetual conflict was inevitable. Yet out of this very conflict rose the powerful All-India Nationalist Movement, which became and is the symbol of political unity.

*Independence, democracy and unity were the pillars of the movement. In accordance with old Indian traditions, toleration, fullest protection and autonomy were promised to all minorities subject only to the essential unity of the country and to the democratic basis of its constitution. Independence means severance from the British Empire,*

*but in the New World it was realised that isolated national existence was not possible or desirable. So India was prepared to join any international federation on an equal basis. But that could come on by after recognition of her independence and through her free will. There could be no compulsion. In particular, India wanted to associate herself closely with China.*

There is now a demand on the part of some Muslims, represented by the Muslim League, for partition of India, and it must be remembered that this demand is a very recent one, hardly four years old. It must also be remembered that there is a large section of Muslims in India who oppose it. Few people take it seriously, as it has no political or economic background. Americans who fought the Civil War to keep their Union together can appreciate how a proposal to divide the country is resented by vast numbers of the Indian people.

Thirty years ago the British Government introduced the principle of separate religious electorates in India, a fatal thing which has come in the way of development of political parties. Now they have tried to introduce the idea of partitioning India, not only into two but possibly many separate parts. This was one of the reasons which led to bitter resentment of the Cripps proposals. The All-India Congress could not agree to this, yet it went far and said if any territorial unity clearly declared its desire to break away, the Congress could not think in terms of compelling it to stay in the Union.

So far as minoritities are concerned, it is accepted on common ground that they should be given fullest constitutional protection, religious, cultural, linguistic and every other way. Backward minorities or classes should in addition be given special educational and other privileges to bring them rapidly to the general level.

The real problem so often referred to is that of the Muslims. They are hardly a minority, as they number about 90,000,000 and it is difficult to see how even a majority can oppress them. As it happens, they are largely concentrated in particular provinces. It is proposed to give full provincial autonomy to every province reserving only certain all-India subjects for the Central Government, and this will give every opportunity for self-development in each cultural area. Indeed, there may even be smaller autonomous cultural areas within the province.

It is possible to devise many ways to give satisfaction to every conceivable minority claim. The Congress has said this must be done by agreement, not by a majority vote. If agreement is not possible on any point, then impartial arbitration should be accepted. Finally, if any territorial unit insists on breaking away after the experience of working in the union, there is going to be no compulsion to force it to stay, provided such severance is geographically possible.

It must be remembered that the problem of Indian minorities is entirely different from nationalities with entirely different racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This is not so in India where, except for a small handful of persons, there is no difference between Hindu and Muslim in race, culture or language. The vast majority of Muslims belong to the same stock as the Hindus and were converted to Islam.

*Few problems in the world to-day are basically so simple of solution as the Indian minority problem. For various reasons it is important to-day and comes in the way of progress, yet it is essentially a superficial problem without deep roots. The real problems of India are economic, the poverty, of low standards. As soon as these are tackled aggressively, as they should be, and modern industry grows, bringing higher standards in its train, the minority problem fades away. It has been a product of unemployment of the middle classes, who had few avenues of work open to them and looked for employment to the State. As State jobs were limited, demand rose for reservation of these for particular communities.*

Every attempt to save the problem thus far has failed because there was always a third party—the British Government. If that Government fades away, the whole background of this problem changes when Indians have to look to themselves. Compulsion of events forces them to face reality and to come to agreement. The only alternative is conflict, which every one is anxious to avoid, over a relatively trivial issue. But even if there is conflict, that is preferable to the present stalemate, and it will produce a solution.

The All-Indian Congress proposal has been that this and other problems should be considered and finally decided by a Constituent Assembly elected by adult franchise. The widest franchise is considered necessary, so the consideration of these questions should rest on those vast numbers of people who are far more interested in economic problems and who do not look for State employment.

Such economic problems cut across religious boundaries and are common to Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist. If such an Assembly could not come to an agreement on any particular minority matters they could be referred to international arbitration. We are perfectly prepared to abide by the decision of such an international tribunal in such matters. But the question of arbitration does not arise over the question of independence. That and the allied question of self-determination must be recognized and accepted before there is a possibility of arbitration over minor matters. On independence we cannot compromise.

**Can the Indians get together ? I have no doubt that they can and they will. Even to-day there is an amazing unity of outlook among them and whatever their internal differences might be, they stand for independence. The real obstacle in the way of real unity and progress is foreign domination. From every point of view it has become an urgent and immediate necessity that Britain should relinquish her hold in India and recognize Indian independence. There is no other way and it is certain, that India must be given complete independence.**

The approach of war to India has made this an even more vital question. Independent India would treat America and Britain as allies in a common enterprise to release her vast energy and resources against every aggressor who invaded her territory. But Indians can no longer function as slaves and underlings in their own country or outside or tolerate being treated as chattels by dominant foreign authority. Submission to this is for them the worst kind of spiritual degradation.

The East will put up with it no longer. Asia will come back to her own though whatever travail and suffering fate may have in store for her. China has poured out her heart's blood in defence of freedom. India would do likewise if the opportunity came to her to fight for her freedom. She seeks no domination over others, but she will put up with no domination over herself. Only independence will release her from long bondage and allow her to play her part fittingly in the terrible drama of the world to-day.

# APPENDIX

## Pakistan and Hindustan

**[Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has expressed his views freely, frankly. fully, fearlessly and forcibly against Pakistan. "There is no place for Pakistan, in this age of Atomic Bomb," he said. The following is the press report of his views on Pakistan expressed at Lahore on July 17, Srinagar on August 2, Lahore on the return journey August 25, and Delhi, August 29, 1945]**

**LAHORE, July 17.—"Separate electorates must go. All the present communal troubles in India are due to separate electorates," said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a press conference this afternoon at the residence of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, President of the Punjab Congress.**

Asked whether after the failure of the Simla Conference, the Congress would resume Congress Ministries in the provinces, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that the resumption of Ministries was not a question of opinion but it depended on the conditions prevailing in the country. Under the present conditions it was inconceivable to form Ministries.

Asked whether communal settlement was necessary for political settlement, he said theoreticaliy it was not essential. The removal of untouchability, and settlement between Hindus and Muslims would obviously make India's freedom battle easier, but it might happen that "before these things are totally achieved India attains freedom." The foundation of progressive and stable society and state were harmony, unity and social equality. Unless they were achieved there would be a constant obstruction to the running of government. If communal unity was achieved beforehand, nothing like that.

Pandit Nehru, continuing, said that the dispute between the Congress and the League was not over seats in the Executive Council. The fundamental principles of the Congress were involved. The Congress had grown on national foundation. It was not possible for the Congress to give up its fundamentals. That would mean killing the Congress that exists to-day.

Referring to the recent stand of the Muslim League, Panditji said that the League's approach was based on disunity of India and on mediæval type of society. He said by this he meant a religious group functioning as a political one.

The Congress had its political programme—to fight for Complete Independence of all irrespective of caste and creed. Its door was open to all communities, who believed in its politics. This made it a political body. On the other hand the Muslim League's door was not open to all but to Muslims alone. This made it a religious group attempting to function as a political group, which gave it mediæval character.

## NO PAKISTAN

Pt. Nehru said that he was opposed to division of India, not because he had any sentimental attachment to united India. It was his progressive and modern mind that made him believe that united India could make us a powerful state. "A divided India will be like a weak state, Iraq and Iran, which in fact were not sovereign but just satellite powers, which stood at the mercy of great nations."

Pakistan, he said, was no solution of the communal problem. In both the zones, minorities would remain. Moreover country could not be divided on religious basis. Protestants and Catholics lived together as the same nation. This was a point over which everyone should ponder seriously. This was a poser to the Muslim League also. "The League can demand separation only of those areas where the Muslims are in an overwhelming majority. It must be remembered that this means division of the Punjab and Bengal. You cannot ask people of those areas of Bengal and the Punjab where non-Muslims are in majority to go with Pakistan. Will the Punjabis or Bengalis, whether Muslim or Hindus, like their provinces which are homogeneous

linguistic units to be divided? These are the problems to be faced. If the Muslims want separation, no power can stop them, but I myself shall try my best to convince all that separation is not in the interest of anyone, certainly not of the Muslims."

Moreover, he said, Muslim League's approach itself was self-contradictory. "You cannot cut the head with the idea of restoring it." Therefore, the solution, Panditjee suggested, was that there should be semi-Independent autonomous provinces with all possible protection to the minorities —cultural, linguistic and religious.

Asked now that the Simla Conference had failed, what would be the future programme of the Congress, Pandit Nehru said "the Congress will take stock of the whole situation—all that happened since 1942, and will lay emphasis on the work of re-organisation."

**It was difficult to say for how long, in the circumstance, would the present world survive. In view of this state of the world the questions like that of Pakistan raised in India had no use and were meaningless.**

To-day the state of the countries in Europe, Pt. Nehru said, was even worse than the Indian States. The need of the hour was that instead of raising slogans of Pakistan and putting forth schemes of division, small countries should join in the Federation to save themselves from destruction. India, he said, was a vast country and instead of raising these minor issues of Pakistan, they should think of planning and increasing the resources and of the removal of unemployment. He and the Congress were thinking of forming a Federation of Free India with other countries, but these minor questions of Pakistan and the like diverted their attention from the real issues. It was a pity that the communal organisations in India made the demand for freedom as conditional. They did not treat it as the first and foremost demand. It was due to fear and mistrust of each other. The Sikhs and the Muslims were brave communities and they had nothing to fear from the Hindus. The Congress had declared that Pakistan was injurious both to India as a whole and to those who demanded it. However if the Musalmans insisted on it they would have it. But Pakistan appeared to him to be an impracticable problem. The Congress had conceded the right of self-determination to the Muslims, but the question was how

the Pakistan was to be enforced. They should consider it with a cool head. It was a great complicated problem and that was why the Muslim League had not so far defined it. If Pakistan was given, then parts of the Punjab and Bengal, where the Hindu population was in majority, would join Hindustan and both Punjab and Bengal would have to be divided. He could not imagine for a moment that any sensible Punjabi or Bengali would like their province to be divided into two parts when their culture and language were the same.

**Pakistan was only a sentimental slogan and unless it was defined, who would give it and who would take it ?**

If the Punjab, Pt. Nehru said, was divided into two parts, the wealthy part with majority of Hindus and Sikhs would go to Hindustan and Pakistan would not be sound financially also.

These problems, he said, would not demand solution by the Congress or the British Government or any one else. But they would be solved of their own accord in accordance with the conditions prevailing in the world. He was sure that even if India was divided, the division would be temporary.

Proceeding, Pandit Nehru referred to happenings of 1942 and said that it was impossible for India to bear the insult to the flag of Indian Independence and its bearers and those who laid down their lives for upkeeping the prestige of India were martyrs and he appreciated their sacrifice.

Continuing his speech, Pandit Nehru said that not only India but the whole world was passing through a critical phase. It was not India alone which was faced with complicated problems, but such problems arose in other countries also. In this rapidly changing world they should not get nervous but should be ready to solve these problems with calmness. Such problems were bound to arise, when India was marching fast towards freedom.

**SRINAGAR, Aug. 2.—" The Congress is strongly of the opinion that India should not be divided into units. The need of the hour, both for economic and defensive reasons, was that India should remain a united country. Small States in the world of tomorrow have no future in store and they are sure to be reduced to the static satellite States like Iraq and Iran. The tendency of Big Powers is to form federation or confederation. India will be finished if it is divided. I stand for a South Asia Federation of India, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Burma." These observations were**

**made by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in response to a suggestion contained in an address which Sheikh Abdullah, the Kashmir Leader presented to Pt. Nehru on the occasion of a public reception held in Pt. Nehru's honour at Hazuri Bagh.**

**Sheikh Abdullah had in his address requested Pt. Nehru to persuade the Congress to declare self-determination of nationalities as an integral part of Congress programme.**

## RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR GROUPS

Pt. Nehru, replying to the address in the presence of one lakh of people said that the main problem before them was the freedom of India and all other problems would be solved after Indian Independence has been achieved. Congress had already acceded the right of self-determination of nationalities. Pt. Nehru made it clear that he did not want to force any unit to remain in bigger India, but it must also be remembered that if a unit wanted to remain aloof, then within itself he shall have to give the same right of self-determination to others as it liked to have it for itself. He asserted that he stood for the right of self-determination for groups even.

Replying to another suggestion made by Sheikh Abdullah, who had pleaded for immediate communal settlement, Pt. Nehru said that efforts had been made by the Congress during the last decade for settlement of the communal issue, but he regretted that each time the door had been banged against the Congress. Vested interests appeared to stand for *status quo*. If somebody did not want settlement of the communal issue, what could the Congress do ? He regretted that under the cloak of religion, disruptive tendencies were being encouraged and India's progress was being retarded in the name of religion by interested persons.

Pt. Nehru proceeding declared, " Those who continue to stand in our way and retard our progress towards the goal of freedom shall have to be removed. " Pt. Nehru added that India was stronger to-day for what had happened during the last three years and had enhanced our prestige.

*LAHORE, Aug. 25.—" In this age of Atomic Bombs and the rapidly changing world, problems like that of Pakistan have no bearing and use. The real problem for various countries is not that of separation but of confederation and unification to save themselves from destruction." Thus declared Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a mammoth gathering of about two lakhs at the Kapurthala House grounds to-night.*

The meeting was timed to be held at 9 p. m. but people started pouring in from the city in unending streams from 7 p. m. and by the scheduled time the whole spacious grounds, the roads nearby and the balconies of the Kapurthala House and the surrounding buildings were packed to capacity. About 10,000 women were present. The loud speakers unfortunately failed and pandemonium prevailed for full two hours. The atmosphere being very close about twelve persons including Bibi Amar Kaur, fainted and had to be removed to the rostrum, fanned and ultimately taken to their houses.

Pandit Jawaharlal, who arrived at the meeting at about 9-30, was greeted with thunderous slogans of "Pt. Nehru Zinda-bad." He felt annoyed at the failure of loud speakers and took the organisers of the meeting to task.

After waiting for full two hours, Pandit Jawaharlal rose to speak. He said that he had gone to Kashmir to see the rapidly changing world from the high peaks of mountains and to compare it with the world of the past 25 years and to think of the past and future of India. There was no doubt that India, for the freedom of which they were fighting to-day, was a great country in ages gone by. India ruled over various other countries of Asia, and its civilisation and culture spread far and wide.

But why was it that India had gone down to-day and was under foreign bondage ? It was because of the narrowness of our vision. There was misuse of religion. When the world was experiencing rapid revolutions, it was a pity that Indians were sticking on to their old things. Mistrust and partisan spirit and communal bickerings were looming large in India.

Pandit Nehru said that the use of Atomic bombs had destroyed five lakhs of people in two cities of Japan. Nippon had been compelled to surrender. In spite of their victory, Pt. Nehru said, the Brirish had been reduced to a second-rate power as a result of the present war ; America and Russia remained the first-rate powers. Revolutions were coming in the world, countries were thinking how to save themselves from destruction by combining but in India they were still fighting among themselves, not only for offices but for position and power in political parties. After the Jallianwala tragedy 25 years ago, India was changing to-day and drifting rapidly towards revolution. The Congress was the only organisation which was responsible for awakening among the masses in India and fighting for their

freedom. The Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and other communal organisations were opposing the Congress today. But the Congress was their mother. These organisations had so far confined themselves to copying the Congress in adopting resolutions and wanted to achieve their object by mere threats. They were not prepared to put them to test and danger as the Congress was doing. He asked the Indians to understand the changing world and to avoid partisan spirit and strife.

Referring to the demand of Pakistan by the Muslim League, Pandit Nehru said that the problem of Pakistan had no use for the world in this age of Atomic Bombs. It became ineffective and had no bearing in these days of development of science. The problem before the various countries was not to separate but to confederate to save themselves from destruction. The scheme of Pakistan aimed at division of India in small parts. The view of the Indian National Congress was that the scheme of division of India was a dangerous scheme and could not facilitate the smooth working of Free India. They did not want freedom for keeping one part of India under the sword of the other, but they wanted economic development of India. If some part of India insisted on separation, the Congress would try to persuade it not to do so, but if it wanted to go out of Hindustan the Congress would allow it to do so. Maulana Azad, Congress President, had made this clear in his statement.

**This long story of Pakistan had no place in this fast changing world. The question of its acceptance and rejection did not arise because Mr. Jinnah, the League President, had not so far defined what he meant by it. Pakistan was not a thing in their pocket to be made over at a moment's notice.**

If the Frontier Province, Punjab and Bengal demanded self-determination, the Congress would be prepared to give, said Pt. Nehru. He advised the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of the Punjab and Bengal to think twice before embarking upon division of their provinces in two. They should bear in mind that, though their religions were different, their culture, civilisation and language were the same. He referred to the Bengal famine, which took a toll of five million men. The problems of starvation and nakedness, he said, were the real problems in India and they could be solved only by the National Government. The Congress was the largest national organisation of India. The Congress alone could deliver goods: no communal organisation could speaak for India. The

Congress, he said, despite represssion, had come out successful and with double the force. The Congress, he said, was the only weapon for India's freedom. He appealed to the people to strengthen the Congress, an organisation which was fighting with the British Government and would not rest until India's independence was achieved.

**NEW DELHI, Aug. 29.—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in an informal chat with New Delhi journalists to-day answered a number of questions on diverse subjects such as Indian Communists and the Congress, atom bomb, Pakistan, elections and war criminals.**

## QUESTION OF SELF-DETERMINATION

The Congress President's statement on self-determination correctly represented the Congress view, said Pandit Nehru. The Congress position was that India should remain a national unit but with a vast deal of provincial autonomy for the federating units. But at the same time if the population of a unit specifically declared that they would not be in the common unit then the Congress would not compel them to stay in the unit. Thus the Congress recognised the right of separation or self-determination. He, however, thought it would be injurious to cut up India and set up communities and groups as separate states. That would be injurious to the defence, development and planning of the country.

Nonetheless if some units wanted to part company, they might do so, provided they did not also drag others who did not want to go. The decision must be taken by all the inhabitants. It should be territorial self-determination. He thought that once the freedom for separation was recognised then the urge for separation would go. The question must be considered dispassionately. His personal views on the question were different. It did not matter whether India was one nation or more than two nations. There was hardly any satisfactory definition of a nation. It could be argued from historical, cultural, racial and a hundred other points. If hundred nations wanted to pull together, then it was one nation. If a particular community or group did not want to pull together with the rest of the country, then it did not matter whether it was one nation or two nations. I call it an alien element in the country, he said. It cannot be absorbed and you cannot digest it. Some way has to be found to suit both parts. Look at this whole theory of two nations. The theory is supposed to

be based on religion. This is what I cannot understand in the modern context of the world. I have heard about it in the Middle Ages. Two nations of India are based on religion and they are interlocked in every village. It will be terribly difficult to transfer population. There will be tremendous upheaval. Suppose a division of India takes place on the basis of two-nation theory. Obviously in one part of the country there will be millions of people owing allegiance, according to this two-nation theory to another part of the counity where one-tenth of the population will owe allegiance to the first part. We are not thinking of territorial loyalties here but religious loyalties. According to this theory the Hindus in the Muslim parts will be aliens and Muslims in Hindu parts will also be aliens. If you accept this theory all sorts of difficulties are bound to arise. Aliens could not be wholly incorporated in a state and in case of war they would become very dangerous elements.

# Indian National Army

**[Pandit Nehru has supported the cause of the officers and soldiers of the Indian National Army. He has called them as patriots, although misguided, and they have fought the British Army with nationalistic intentions. The following is the press report of his two interviews which he granted to the Associated Press of India at Srinagar and New Delhi on August 19, and August 28, 1945 respectively.]**

"There is one matter which has been paining and troubling me for some time, but to which I have made no reference so far, because any mention of it might have been misunderstood. But now that the war has ended, there is no such reason for remaining silent on that issue. This concerns the 20,000 or more prisoners of the so-called Indian National Army, which had been formed in Malaya and Burma, I was of the opinion three years ago and am still of the opinion that the leaders and others of this army had been misguided in many ways and had failed to appreciate the larger consequences of their unfortunate association with the Japanese.

Three years ago I was asked in Calcutta what I would do if Subhas Bose led an army into India on the plea of liberating India. I replied then that I would not hesitate to resist this invasion even though I did not doubt that Subhas Bose and his Indian colleagues and followers were motivated by the desire to free India and were in no way mere tools of the Japanese. Nevertheless, they had put themselves on the wrong side and were functioning under the Japanese auspices. No person could come to India in this way or under such foreign auspices.

Therefore, whatever the motive behind the people, they had to be resisted in India or outside.

But the situation has completely changed with the end of war. And now a very large number of officers and soldiers of this Indian National Army, as it is called, are prisoners, and some of them at least have been executed.

Though proper information is lacking, it is reliably stated that very bad treatment is being given to them in prisons and forts, where they are kept and many of them live in the shadow of death. I do not wish to complain to the British for the strict military rule. They could plead justification for treating with rebels in any way they like. But as an Indian and as one representing in this respect the views of almost all Indians of whatever party or group, I would say that it would be supreme tragedy if these officers and men are liquidated by way of punishment.

Whatever their feeling and mistakes may have been in the past, and these were serious, there can be no doubt that they are a fine body of young men, taken as a whole, fine officers and fine rank and file and that their dominating motive was love for India's freedom. At any time, it would have been wrong to treat them too harshly, but at this time, when it is said that big changes are impending in India, it would be a very grave mistake, leading to far-reaching consequences, if they were treated just as ordinary rebels, the punishment given to them would in effeet be a punishment on all India and all Indians and a deep wound would be created in millions of hearts. In this matter, fortunately there is no commuanl question, for these officers and men are Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

From such accounts as have come to me, it appears probable that this Indian National Army first took shape when Singapore was almost surrounded by the Japanese and most of the British army left by boats. The Indian Army in Malaya was, therefore, left stranded by the fortunes of war and was completely at the mercy of the Japanese.

*At that time a junior officer of the British Indian Army, Sardar Mohan Singh, apparently got into touch with the Japanese Command and organised the remnants of the Indian troops there, which amounted to nearly 7,000. Although Mohan Singh, to some extent, co-operated with the Japanese, they resisted their encroachments in many ways and refused to be a tool in their hands. After many months, matters came to a crisis and Mohan Singh, who had proved a very efficient and brave organiser, was arrested by the Japanese and disappeared completely. Probably, he was executed by the Japanese.*

This in itself shows the curious and anomalous position of this Indian National Army and how its leaders were continually trying to prevent the exploitation of their men for Japanese imperialist purposes. How far they succeeded in this I do not know. But the motive underlying their action comes out clearly and it is important.

In view of all this, I earnestly trust that nothing will be done in regard to these prisoners of war whieh will lead to an additional festering sore in India's mind and heart. With the end of war, the immediate exigency past, larger considerations should prevail.

Commenting on the Government of India's communique on the treatment to be accorded to the Indian National Army, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in an interview to-day said : " I am glad that the Government of India have issued a communique in regard to the prisoners of the Indian National Army formed in Malaya in 1942. The veil at last has been lifted, but facts are still hidden. I would suggest that those facts, or many of them, should be released to the public. What is the total number of officers and prisoners of this army in the various forts, camps and prisons of India ?

" What action has already been taken in regard to any of them ? What were the original circumstances which led to the formation of this army in Malaya, for instance ?

" It has been stated, with what authority I do not know, that they were left there to shift for themselves. Many points of constitutional law arise and these should be considered carefully by competent experts of those laws. It may be maintained that any such Army, formed in the circumstances then existing and recognised by a foreign power as an independent army, gains status of a combatant force and its prisoners should be treated as ordinary prisoners of war. I am not expert enough in constitutional law to give an opinion, but I am sure this matter is worthy of earnest consideration.

" The main point, however, is not one of law. It depends on the approach to the question. Is it a completely English and non-Indian approach, or is it an Indian approach ? I can understand and appreciate the English approach, but I can also understand and not only appreciate but deeply feel the Indian approach, which, I think, must be common not only in the civilian population of Indian but also in the British Indian Army.

"The war is over happily for all of us and problems must be viewed in terms of peace and not of war. Political consequences of any act of severe punishment must be taken into consideration and there is no doubt that such political consequences might be deep and far-reaching. In this connection. a possible comparison common, though not wholly apposite, is that of the Marquis in France. When the German army wanted to deal with the Marquis as rebels of the Petain Government, General Eisenhower very rightly issued a stern warning to them and told them that the Marquis must be treated as combatant forces and allowed the privileges of prisoners of war.

" There can be no doubt that this Indian National Army functioned as regular, organised, disciplined and uniformed combatant force. There can be no mistake in this. It was unfortunate that many of them were misguided enough to support a wrong cause, but it should never be forgotten that they had no desire or intention of supporting that cause as such, but were moved by their passion for India's freedom. I have no doubt in my mind that the vast majority of the Indian men and officers of the British Indian Army will appreciate generous treatment to their old comrades in arms."

# The Punjab and The Punjabis

**[The Punjab finds a special place in the heart of Jawaharlal, because we mounted him upon the white horse in 1929 and helped him to pass the Resolution on Complete Independence ! He loves the heroic Punjabis, but he is disgusted with the present Punjab politics. Consequently his rebuke to the people of the Punjab is timely and let us hope it will fructify into the flower of increased effort for Complete Independence.]**

## BIGGEST MEETING I HAVE EVER ADDRESSED IN MY LIFE

" Let the soldier Premier, Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana take up the case of the members of the Indian National Army, majority of whom happen to be Punjabis and save their lives," observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing the second mammoth meeting of the citizens of Lahore. Thousands of people including men, women and children started pouring in from all parts of Lahore and suburbs since 2 o'clock. To-day's arrangements at the meeting were, however, perfect and the crowd unlike yesterday behaved in a most disciplined manner and listened to Panditji's speech in pin-drop silence. Congress volunteers were at their posts controlling the crowd tactfuly.

Lala Jagat Narain, President of the District Congress Committee was in the chair.

Pandit Jawaharlal, who unexpectedly arrived at the meeting exactly at 7 p. m., was greeted with slogans of Zindabad and received prolonged ovation as he rose to address the gathering.

Panditji addressed the meeting for full two hours.

Pandit Jawaharlal congratulated the citizens of Lahore for their unusual discipline at yesterday's meeting which was the biggest meeting he had ever addressed throughout his public career. It was yesterday as it was to-day a pleasing sight to see vast concourse of people assembled here. Why was it so ? It was because a humble servant of the nation and the motherland he had become a symbol of their eyes like national flag. He belonged to the nation and the nation had made him. Despite the rigours of jail life he considered himself fortunate that the people of India confided in him and his only anxiety was that he should not lower the prestige of India.

Thousands of people, he said, whom they did not know and who were not heard of, had made great sacrifices in the cause of India's freedom. Lakhs had worked for the Congress and had helped in raising India to its present position.

## PARTY BICKERINGS IN PUNJAB

Refering to the Punjab, Pandit Nehru pointed out that Punjabis had more latent energy and more enthusiasm and keen desire for freedom.

The Province was superior in many respects to several other provinces, but its energy was being wasted by party bickerings and personal squabbles at the cost of large interests of the country than other provinces.

Proceeding Pandit Nehru brought home to all those present the tremendous sacrifices made by countries like Britain, Russia, America and China for the liberation of their country. Similar sacrifices had not yet been made by Indians for the cause of freedom of their country.

Pandit Jawaharlal pointed out that he had no intention of minimising the sacrifices made by their countrymen during the last three years. They all knew through what a regime of repression some provinces of India had passed and how efforts were made by the authorities to crush the national movement in the country.

Tracing history of the Congress during the last 25 years, Pandit Nehru said that ever since the first non-co-operation movement, launched by Mahatma Gandhi, the country had made remarkable progress. It was entirely due to this awakening that the country passed through the fiery ordeal during August, 1942. The Congress being an unlawful association during all these years, the enthusiasm

of the people of the country had not abated in the least. During the short period after his release he had clearly seen that a new life had undoubtedly been infused among the people throughout the length and breadth of India. The masses were still yearning for the freedom of the country.

## EXHORTATION TO PUNJABIS

Pandit Nehru exhorted the Punjabis to derive the maximum benefit from the latent energy and unbounded enthusiasm which they possessed in an abundant degree and to use that energy in securing the freedom of the country.

Continuing, Pandit Jawaharlal said that on the one hand the Muslim League had raised the issue of Pakistan, while on the other hand, they were busy with economic, political, social and cultural problems affecting the world. India could not stand isolated unit unmindful of what was happening all over the world. Some people in India were clamouring for vivisection of the country while the world was drifting towards federation of several countries for the safeguard of future struggles. Nobody, he said, could compel a particular unit to remain attached to particular federation against their will.

## DEMOBILISATION

Referring to the problem of demobilisation in India, Pandit Nehru said that it was a complex issue and added that present Government of India would not be able to successfully tackle this difficult question of resettling 20 lakhs of Indian soldiers, although they were expressing grave concern for their future.

Pandit Nehru alluded to another problem, which, he said, had been constantly disturbing his peace of mind for the lset few days regarding the treatment to be meted out to the soldiers of the " Indian National Army," who had sided with Japan. Although the speaker was confirmed in his opinion that their action in joining the enemy was absolutely wrong and unfortunate, they were actuated by noble motives for the freedom of India. Freedom, he said, could not be secured by joining any foreign nation. The country, however, would wish lenient treatment towards them and would like to know as to what was happening behind the scene as regards their fate. Any hasty action against them might spoil the relations between England and India.

Concluding his speech, Pandit Jawaharlal appealed to all those present to sink their personal and party differences and work unitedly to solve the bigger issues of freedom of the country.

Addressing the gathering, Pt. Nehru gave his view of India's history and how it had evolved with special reference to the history of the Asiatic people. He began, of course, by referring to the Punjab, which he described as a "strange province with many peculiarities." He said often it is stated that he felt annoyed with the Punjab and chided the Punjabis. That was so, said Pt. Nehru, but he wanted to add that every province and people had their peculiarities and shortcomings. It was easy to weigh them with good points which every province and its people have. But he wanted to assure his Punjabi friends that chiding or rebuking for any shortcoming could be given only where there existed no formalities and his rebuke and chiding to them were always a form of affection for them.

Replying to an interruption that the Kashmiris are half Punjabis, Pt. Nehru said the Kashmiris refuse to accept that. He, however, mentioned that he felt himself closely connected with this Punjab, because his mother was a Punjabi and he used to come and stay in the Punjab in his younger days.

One thing, however, which he did not like, was that any people or leaders of a province should go about asking favours from the British rulers. It did not look nice to him that such distinguished leaders as Master Tara Singh or others should ask for favours from British rulers. "We must all unite and carve our own destinies."

In the course of this talk, Pandit Nehru paid a glowing tribute to the people of the Punjab and said: "I go back from Lahore and the Punjab with vivid memories of these three days. A visit to the Punjab is always rather frightening because of the exuberance of its people but it is also an exhilarating experience. I have long been convinced that the people of the Punjab are a magnificent material for the great task of building up a new India. The only difference has been that their energies are often diverted into mutually contradictory channels. But I have always found that the disputes are all at the top and the mass of people are not too much interested in them, though they are influenced. So far as the Congress is concerned, it has enormous, though vague, hold on the people.

Their hold is not organisational as such. It is an attraction to the ideals of the Congress. If it can be turned into organisational hold, the Congress will sweep all in front of it. That can be done only on the basis of masses, especially those in the rural areas. The time seems to ripe for doing that and I appeal to all Congressmen and to all those hundreds and thousands who have honoured me and moved me by their affectionate love to turn their minds to this vital task. They must all try to forget past conflicts and differences among themselves and remember only that they are the proud standard-bearers of the cause of India's freedom and nationalism, which the Congress has represented so worthily for such a long time. We want as large numbers as is possible for this work, but it must be remembered also that ultimately, it is the quality that always counts and quality alone. Each Congressman must remember that by his acts he may bring honour to the Congress or he may bring dishonour also, for he must be judged by higher standards than others. We have ourselves set the standard higher and we must try to live up to it.

Repression only helps in strengthening our national movement. Its latest proof is all that happened after August 1942. The Congress has come out hundred per cent. stronger from the struggle with thousands of new enthustiasic cadres thrown up, observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru while addressing a closed-door meeting of Congressmen. About 2,000 workers from all over the province attended.

# Nehru Miscellany

**[Since Nehru's release from the British Jail, the Indian public has been thirsting to know his views on each and every topic of the world. He has been pelted with questions everywhere to extract his views on every possible subject. It is remarkable that youth of the country do not fling their queries at Mahatma Gandhi or Mohammad Ali Jinnah. It is Nehru whom they have made the target of their curiosity and the custody of their affections.]**

SRINAGAR, Aug. 7.—"I consider it dangerous for religious organisations to dabble in politics," said Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, replying to an address of welcome presented to him by the Yuvak Sabha on behalf of the Kashmiri Pandits.

Pandit Nehru said: "India has been harmed by communal organisations. If you also run in communal channels you are degraded."

He added: "In Kashmir the Muslims are 95 per cent. of the population. If you Kashmiri Pandits remain on inimical terms with the Muslims, it is not in your interest. There is a mass movement already in the State. The Maharaja or the British Government will not always protect you. It behoves you to live in peace with your Muslim neighbours. The National Conference has started a national movement in the State. Every Kashmiri should help it. Unemployment cannot be solved by a small number of Government services. It can only be solved by setting the basic things right. Revolutionary changes are fast approaching the world."

## ATOMIC BOMB

It was high time, said Pandit Nehru, that they should concentrate all their efforts in finding out a solution of the future problems that were facing India and the world. Such revolutions as were taking place at present had never before taken place in the history of the world. The Atomic Bomb, which had now been invented, had created new problems for humanity. Indians were still engrossed with the old worn-out problems and had been least affected by the world factors.

## SLOGANS WON'T SOLVE PROBLEMS

Neither sologans nor prayers, said Pandit Jawahar Lal, would solve their problems. The poverty of India was disturbing him at the moment and it was his first concern, he said, to devise ways and means to end this.

## CONGRESS POLICY

Pandit Nehru then described Congress policy in the light of the 8th August Resolution and its further clarification by Maulana Azad regarding the right of self-determination for any section of the people. He said Pakistan was undefined so far and was unworkable.

He then referred to the happenings of August 1942 and thought that it had strengthened the faith of the people in freedom.

Panditji stressed the strength and importance of the Congress as against communal organisations which were pursuing ideals of crude freedom by having recourse to methods of opportunism.

He described such a policy as short-sighted.

He said the Congress would fight the elections on the strength of its principles and he would not like to have their vote out of any compromise. He thought that the country was solidly behind them.

In conclusion he praised Subhas Chandra Bose and urged the Government to accord better treatment to soldiers of the Indian National army and asked the Punjab Government to release all the political prisoners, some of whom were rotting in jail since the First Great War.

Panditji left for Delhi by Frontier Mail.

## ATOMIC BOMB

On the Atomic Bomb Pandit Nehru had a scientist's outlook. Long ago he had taken degree in science and had studied physics before the present development with the Atom. He was fascinated with the theory that almost anything eould be made radio-active. In the spare moments of a politician's life he had tried to read science and was greately interested in the Atomic Bomb. The discovery had released tremendous forces in the world which could be used for good or evil. For the time being it had been used only to destroy cities and kill people. There was now a race in this world between constructive forces and destructive forces.

Since the last generation that race had become more and more frantic and with the coming of the Atomic bomb it looked as though one of them must win. Which would win he could not say. I am not interested in the destruction of men in the world, but there is no good making a fuss about it, he said. It could not be kept a secret for long and in fact most of the advanced countries were on the verge of discovering it. Undoubtedly they would have it and use it if the war came again. That meant tremendous destruction. From a humanitarian point of view he would enquire into the basic cause. It was a very grave responsibility for any country that use Atomic Bombs. A very great responsibility rests with the United States. It justified the use of Atomic Bomb on the ground that it stopped war but by unlashing such a weapon it had created a dangerous situation. The Atomic Bomb brought a measure of hope also. Faced with such a destructive weapon people wake up.

Asked if the future Government of India would have atomic bombs in their armoury, Pandit Nehru said that so long as the world was constituted as it was, every country would have to devise and use the latest scientific devices for its protection. He had no doubt India would develop her scientific researches and hoped Indian scientists would use the atomic force for constructive purposes. But if India was threatened she would inevitably try to defend herself by all means at her disposal. He hoped India, in common with other countries, would prevent the use of Atomic Bombs.

## IS SUBHAS BOSE WAR CRIMINAL ?

An American journalist asked for clarification of Pandit Nehru's attitude to Subhas Chandra Bose who, he said, was not

probably dead but alive in Saigon. He said that Bose should be treated as a war criminal because his men fought and killed many Americans and he extorted money from the poor in Burma and Malaya. An Indian correspondent intervened and said that no case of the Indian National Army having fought the American forces had ever come to sight. His investigations showed that Bose's government levied some kind of tax on Indians only.

Pandit Nehru reiterated his views on Subhas Chandra Bose. He resented the suggestion that Subhas Bose should be dealt with as a war criminal. Pandit Nehru said personally, I should be very happy if all persons considered as war criminals are brought to trial and facts come out. But they should be tired by American and Indian judges as well. And in my list there will be many high officials sitting in Delhi who will be war criminals. The judges should be impartial. Pandit Nehru said that he knew Subhas for over twenty years; he was the President of the Congress. A most unusual thing happened and an ex-President of the Congress was turned out of the organisation. That was before the war. He also formed a party to attack the Congress. Then came the war and from India he went to Germany and then to Japan. So far as Pandit Nehru knew the Indian National Army had already been formed even before Bose came to Japan. He did not find anything unusual for a supposed legal government to levy taxes. As for extortion, Pandit Nehru alleged, there was enough in India. Free gifts were collected for war funds and millions had been extorted. Three millions died of starvation in Bengal. As for Bose he had never doubted his passion for freedom. Bose had no love for the Japanese but, Pandit Nehru added, he was foolish in imagining that by allying himself with the Japanese and the Germans, who were not only aggressive powers but dangerous powers, he could get India's freedem.

## SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

### Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru's Glowing Tribute

ABBOTTABAD, Aug. 24.—Glowing tributes to the late Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, ex-President of the Indian National Congress, were paid by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while addressing a public meeting at Abbottabad, where he arrived this morning from Nathiagali.

A resolution of condolence was also passed, expressing sympathy with the relatives of the late Mr. Subhas Bose and offering prayers for the soul of the deceased.

With tears in his eyes, Pandit Nehru said : "While the news of the death of Subhas Bose has shocked me, it has given me relief that, struggling for the cause of India's independence to which he has given his life, he has escaped all pending troubles which brave soldiers, who do such things, might face. He was not only brave but had deep love for freedom. He believed that, right or wrong, whatever he did, it was for the independence of India. The news of his death has again revived my associations of 1919-20 with him, when we worked together and I realised his value. I personally did not agree with him in many respects. He left us and formed a separate Forward Bloc, but nobody can doubt his sincerity that he struggled for the whole of his life for the independence of India in his own way."

(*The news of Subhas Bose's death is now regarded as incorrect.*)

## CONGRESS AND COMMUNIST PARTY

The Congress attitude towards the Communist Party had nothing to do with Communism or the Soviet Union. It was entirely a question of internal politics in India on which there was difference of opinion and, therefore, it was proposed that in the executive of the Congress it would be wrong to have people who did not agree with the policy of the Congress.

Pandit Nehru thought that the Congress election programme would deal with political, economic, national and international problems. The August 8th Resolution fully explained the Congress approach to the international problems. On the national issue it was independence. And in regard to the economic problem there were a variety of Congress resolutions on the subject. They needed to be developed because the Congress was mainly an agrarian body and industrial and labour issues should be included. There was, however, general agreement on the industrial policy, namely, that heavy and key industries should be state-owned and controlled. Smaller might be left to private enterprise. On the question of planning there must be a measure of state control—not day-to-day control because that led to complication, nepotism, corruption and so on.

## LORD WAVELL'S SINCERITY

Questioned about Lord Wavell's sincerity, he said that Lord Wavell represented policy of the British Government and there was no question of his sincerity or insincerity. If the Simla Conference had succeeded, it would have enhanced his prestige. His breaking up of the conference was according to the policy of the British Government.

## UNIONISTS AND CONGRESS

Asked if he would like the Congress to work hand in glove with the Unionist Government against the Muslim League, Pandit Nehru said that his advice to the Congressmen in the Punjab would be to stand on their own legs and to oppose everyone who stood in their way. He said that the Congress would like to have general elections.

As Chairman of the Planning Committee he was for rapid industrialisation of India but wanted cottage industries like *charkha*-spinning, etc., to flourish.

Pandit Nehru said that as it had been clear in the resolution of the Working Committee at its meeting in Delhi, in 1942, the Congress was ready to recognise right of self-determination of territorial units, though it would like to have India united. He did not see any contradiction in that resolution and in Lala Jagat Narain's resolution at Allahabad.

# India's March To Freedom

**[Coming out of His Majesty's prison, Pandit Nehru has plunged himself straight away into India's battle for independence, and has given a great impetus to the forces of freedom throughout the length and breadth of this sub-continent. The chained Prometheus has been let loose. The sleeping masses have risen to their feet, and there is much more militant nationalism in the atmosphere than it ever was before or during the "Quit-India," struggle for freedom in 1942. " Quit-India " has become the slogan of the Congress for elections and other matters connected with the battle for political emancipation of India. It is not possible to quote all that Pandit Nehru has been saying recently from the pulpit and the platform. We quote below some very significant newspaper reports to give an idea as to how his mind acts and how the public reacts to it.]**

## THE RISING TIDE

**" Britain's rule in India is the result of our disunity. It is our internal strife that invites the British to remain here. If there is to be a revolution it must be in all spheres of our life. With the rising tide of Nationalism new forces are rising and nobody can arrest our march towards the cherished goal of freedom," said Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru addressing the Kanya Kubja Vocational Institute, Lucknow. A purse of Rs. 500 was presented to him.**

He added : "We are witnessing vast changes in the world. India, with her past glory and great traditions, could not be left unaffected. We are part and parcel of the gigantic

world struggle which will influence all aspects of our life—social, economic, political and cultural."

Pandit Nehru criticised the custom of touching the feet. He said students should not bow unnecessarily before everybody. Due respeet must, however, be paid to elders but there was no need for showing undue humility to all.

Concluding, Pandit Nehru said : "I see young boys here who are full of vigour, but how many of you will be able to retain that vigour in the years to come, I cannot tell. The future will have to give the reply."

## PEOPLE'S RESOLVE

The first call to the people of Bombay to extend their whôle-hearted support to the Congress in the coming eleetions, in which it has decided to participate, was given by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, presiding over a mass meeting.

"It is in your hands to see that the forthcoming elections to the Provincial and Central Legislatures are the last in this country under the present conditions and that the next elections are held in a free India," Sardar Patel said, speaking in Hindi. A large gathering was present at the Shivaji Park where the Congress High Command had decided to hold a public meeting to be addressed by Mahatma Gandhi after the passing of the "Quit India" resolution in August 1942.

Sardar Patel assured them that the moment India became a free country, the Congress organisation would cease to function and the power and control over the affairs of the nation would automatically go into the hands of the sons of the nation.

Reviewing the conditions that obtained in the country after the arrest of leaders on August 9th, 1942, Sardar Patel remarked that this was the first time when they were able to hold a public meeting and discuss their problems in a free atmosphere. After their release recently from imprisonment the leaders found, wherever they went, a new spirit and awakening in the hearts of the people. The arrest of the leaders and the violent onslaught resorted to by the Government had not crushed the spirit and courage of the people. The heroism the people showed during the trying period, Sardar Patel remarked, was marvellous and was ample demon-

stration to the outside world that the people were determined to make sacrifices for the cause of the country's freedom.

The August Resolution, Sardar Patel added still remained to be implemented. The fight for freedom had not concluded. There was no question of defeat as far as India was concerned, he said, as the cause for which they were fighting was legitimate.

Sardar Patel referred to the British Government's latest proposals and the forthcoming elections and said that the sincerity of the Government's professions would be known in due course. The purpose of fighting the elections, the Sardar said, was twofold. The Congress could demonstrate to the world that the whole country was behind the national organisation, in spite of the attempt on the part of the Government to crush it, and that the people were determined to win freedom. The various problems facing them to-day had to be tackled and so people's trusted representatives were required. They had also to organise themselves and prepare for another struggle, if necessary, and for that purpose their resources and strength should be marshalled in good time.

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who addressed the meeting, was cheered when he observed that "the August Resolution still held the field." "The resolution," Pandit Nehru said, "has the sanction of the people behind it. It shows the resolve of the people to be a free nation."

There had been many mistakes on the part of some Congressmen. But there was no instance, Pandit Nehru asserted, of any Congressman having staked the honour of the Congress and the country. They had kept the name of the Congress without stain and their spirit remained bright.

Whether the Labour Government was sincere or not in its offer to India, the Congress had to assess, from time to time, the strength it derived from the people. From what he had seen in the course of his tour of the various parts of the country, he had no doubt that the strength of the Congress had enormously increased. The presence of people in such large numbers at the meeting, Pandit Nehru said, was an index to the fact that the whole country was hehind the Congress.

Referring to the ensuing elections, Pandit Nehru said that the Congress had decided to contest and secure the

maximum number of seats in the Legislatures, because many problems facing them to-day had to be solved. The conditions of famine, the huge accumulated sterling balances, the problem of demobilised men, the disposal of war surpluses, factories, buildings and similar other problems had to be solved. These could find a satisfactory solution only in the hands of a free people.

Mr. Shankerrao Deo, member of the Congress Working Committee, speaking in Marathi, said that when they went to jail after passing the "Quit India" resolution and when they proceeded to Simla to discuss the Wavell offer, it was only for winning the freedom of India. "We live as a free people or we die in the cause of the freedom of India. This is our resolve," he said.

## MUSLIM MASSES

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru replied to the critics of Congress policy who had suggested that the Congress had no contact with Muslim masses.

"The Congress may have committed mistakes in the past, but the Congress has certainly never been guilty of not trying to reach each and every section of the people."

Pandit Nehru declared : "I intend very shortly to tour the Muslim districts of the United Provinces and would ask Dr. Ashraf and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din to come with me to see for themselves how Muslims respond to the Congress. I am afraid these gentlemen are looking at the issue with the wrong end of the telescope."

**Pandit Nehru, continuing, declared : "We have done our best to come to an understanding with the Muslim League in the past. We have now come to the conclusion that it is in the best interest of the country to keep away from Muslim League leaders hereafter." (Loud cheers.)**

**" Dr. Ashraf and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din have forgotten the way our President was humiliated by the League leaders. Until and unless they make amends for this, we are not prepared to have any discussions or negotiations with the League leaders", said Pt. Nehru.**

**Pandit Jawaharlal proceeded : " We take the Muslims into our confidence. We shall do everything to satisfy their demands and win them over completely to the Congress but we shall not go again to the Muslim League leaders."**

"Earlier in his speech, Pandit Nehru announced that the Congress Working Committee would frame an election manifesto in which task the points raised during the debate on the resolution would be kept in mind by the Committee. He hoped that the A.-I.C.C. would have an opportunity of approving this manifesto. He did not think they should bind themselves to definite promises in the manifesto as the British Government's proposals, on which the elections were going to be based were vague and ambiguous and consequently they could not be sure what they could achieve through these elections.

The Congress should utilise its strength in the right direction and he felt sure that the country would respond to the Congress whole-heartedly. He did not think it would be advisable to include anything specifically about the problem of minorities or Indian States in this resolution.

## SELF-DETERMINATION

In this connection, the Pandit dwelt upon the question of Self-determination. He said, he entirely agreed that this principle was correct. India would not be free until the population stood together. It was only with the co-operation of every section that they would be able to free India. If any section was decided on following a particular line of action, nobody could prevent it from doing so.

**Referring to Dr. Ashraf's speech Pt. Nehru said there had been no two opinions in the country regarding the nature of the war which had just concluded. It was certainly not peoples' war or Indians' war. Yet Communists went about calling it a peoples' war and misleading the public.**

He assured the members that suggestions made in the course of the debate would, as far as possible, be incorporated in the election manifesto.

## A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT GUTS

Addressing his first big election meeting at Saidabad in the interior of the district of Allahabad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru pointedly asked the audience to vote for the Congress in the forthcoming elections.

He said: "I have no doubt that considering the strength of the Congress, there may not be contest for many seats for the legislature, but it should not mean that we must slacken our efforts."

Pandit Nehru also asked the Muslims present in the gathering to vote for Congress candidates or for those nationalist (Muslim) organisations which had their aims akin to the Congress.

Congress, said Pandit Nehru, was the only organisation which represented Hindus, Muslims and all other communities in the country and was fighting for the independence of the country. It was wrong to say that it wanted to crush any community.

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the country had been the abode of several religious communities for a very long time. Any government which was to be formed was to look to the interests of all communities. The question of religion was not considered by a government. Problems which had the interest of all the communities were the only concern of a democratic government. It was, therefore, futile to raise communal question at this time.

Pandit Nehru referred to the present administrative machine of the Government and said that it had neither the guts nor the brain to solve the big problems, which the country had faced during the last three years or will have to face now in the post-war world.

The Bengal famine was a living example of this, said Pandit Nehru.

The entire country, he added, was against the present administration and a government which had neither the brain nor the power to solve big problems had no right to exist. Only "Swarajya," government of the people could help the country in the present circumstances. The A.-I.C.C. Resolution of August 1942 had said this very thing—and the Congress still adhered to it. Our problems could only be solved when we had our own government.

Pandit Nehru also explained to the villagers the meaning of Swarajya. Swarajya he said, was the government of the people and for the people. In such a government, the chosen representative of the people would govern them. Any man could approach them and express his grievances. If these representatives did not look to their interests, they could remove them from the office to which the people had put them. Such a government, the Pandit stressed, could solve the problems of the people which were facing them or would face them in the future.

Pandit Nehru also referred to the strength which the country had gained after 1942.

" The British Government," he said, "wanted to crush us, but here we are to-day with much more strength than ever before."

He asked the andience not to waste their energy. They must utilise it to the full.

He exhorted the audience to organise themselves properly, and urged them to enrol themselves in iarge numbers as members of the Congress."

## PEOPLE'S RAJ

I have not come here to lament on what happened to you in 1942. " India can never forget the brave people of Ballia—her *kisans* and youths," observed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a public meeting at Baria, 20 miles from Ballia. Out of 46 persons killed by police and military firing, 21 came from this village.

Pandit Nehru congratulated the people of Ballia for the part played by them during the August movement of 1942. Referring to the Government measures to crush the movement, he said that all inhuman repressive measures to crush the people were ineffective. But, nevertheless, those responsible for these repressive measures, be they British or Indian, would be punished, he added.

He said that what happened in Ballia in August 1942, when the people's *Raj* was established for about a week in the district, was the forerunner of what was going to happen in the country very soon. Terrible police repression for the last three years had no effect on the people of this conntry, who were determined to win Swaraj.

It may be noted that Baria is a place where on August 18, 1942 a pitched battle raged between police and a mob when the former in course of firing killed more than 20 and injured 41 persons.

**Here when the station was captured by the mob, Pandit Nehru revealed, in the course of his speech at Baria, a boy gave his life to keep the honour of the national flag. Pt. Nehru said, during the August disturbances, the boy went to the Baria Police Station to hoist the National Flag on a building. The police threats that any attempt at hoisting national flag would meet with grave consequences was of no avail to the boy. He went straight with the flag and faced the police who shot him dead.**

**" India can never forget that boy," said Pt. Nehru.**

Besides three other meetings addressed by Pandit Nehru in the course of the day he addressed a meeting at Ballia in the afternoon when about 20,000 people were present.

**Harrowing tales of oppression by police and military authorities were related to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru by Muslim workers of Rasra (Ballia).**

The officers responsible for cold-blooded torture of the peoples, said Pandit Nehru, should be brought to book not out of revenge but to demonstrate to the world how bureaucracy behaved during those memorable days.

## LIST OF CRIMINALS

Election campaign in the United Provinces on behalf of the Congress was launched when a public meeting attended by more than 35,000 people in Aminabad Park, was addressed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant and Babu Purshottam Das Tandon; Mr. Chanura Bhan Gupta, M.L.A., presiding.

Pandit Nehru, in the course of his speech, referred to the corruption prevalent in India and said : "I charge the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council of filling their pockets" and remarked that prevalence of corruption here was unprecedented in the history of the world. He referred to the victims of the Bengal Famine and said that India would never compromise with traitors of the country, the anti-national criminals. The time would come when India's list of criminals would be prepared—of those officials of bureaucracy and black marketeers who tyrannised over the people during the last five years.

While referring to the League demand for Pakistan, Pandit Nehru said that he failed to understand how the 'Quit India' demand of the Congress could be harmful to the Muslims.

"There can be no Pakistan. You cannot force Hindus and Sikhs of Bengal and Punjab to live in Pakistan. No Bengali or Punjabi wants the division of his province. Bengal which has a culture of its own, or the Punjab where the provincial trend is predominant, would not tolerate division."

Continuing, Pandit Nehru said: "The 'Quit India' Resolution stands and its implications form the plan of the election campaign of the Congress."

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant made a graphic survey of the last three years and referred to the revolutionary change that had come in India's outlook. All parties which talk of division of India cause riots, wherein the poorer people suffer most, he added.

Babu Purshottam Das Tandon welcomed the Congress Working Committee's decision of having no truck with the Muslim League.

## REIGN OF TERROR

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a statement, to the press says :

On my return to my province, I must take the first opportunity to express my horror and disgust on recent occurrence in Benares, news of which reached me in Bombay. It was reported that three under-trial political prisoners in a Benares jail were to be taken for trial to a court, which was situated about a mile away. They were in fetters and had handcuffs on and yet they were asked to walk this distance. They said that it was not possible for them to walk with fetters on and that they should be taken in a conveyance. This was refused and they were knocked down and dragged by the legs and arms all the way to the court, just as a dead animal might be dragged. Their clothes were torn, their skins scrapped off, and they arrived at their destination with their backs and buttocks torn and bleeding. On the way a request for water was met with insults.

I find it difficult to believe that such sadistic horror can be perpetrated even by those who, by long practice in them, have ceased to function as normal human beings. But everything was done in public in a great city like Benares ; the evidence is there and the local Bar Association has protested. What amazes me still further is that anyone who saw this horror could have tolerated it for a minute. There are somethings which cannot be tolerated whatever the consequences.

It is reported that the person chiefly responsible was a police inspector named Tweesdale. That man should be tried in open court for an offence which surely exceeds in its enormity and inhumanity almost anything that the Penal Code contains. But responsibility must rest also on the Police Superintendent and the District Magistrate and the whole administration under which sadism, frightfulness and inhumanity in such extreme forms flourish.

## DAWN OF DELIVERANCE

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a public meeting here under the auspices of the National Christian Association, said that the vast problems that face India to-day could only be solved by a Government of the people in a free and independent India. He had no doubt that India would be free and independent soon as he found wherever he went the spirit of rebellion among the people in the country still alive.

After reviewing briefly the political situation in the country since 1942, Pandit Nehru said that with the end of the war many acute problems were cropping in India which could only be solved by a popular Government which had the full support of this country. The present Government was totally incapable and incompetent to cope with the new situation. The whole economic and political structure of India on which was based the present topsy-turvy administration should be transformed in order to deal with the vast problem of poverty of the people. India was going to play an important role in world affairs and the speaker said that only free and progressive India could play such a role in a commonwealth of free nations of the world.

Pandit Nehru said that in the context of larger problems of India, minor problems of different religious and cultural groups were not urgent issues for which the freedom of India could wait. The Christian community in India, the Pandit said, had its own problems, but in a free and independent India there would be complete freedom for every religious and cultural group to solve those problems peculiar to it. But only united effort of the people with the mutual co-operation of various communal and religious groups in the country was necessary to win freedom and to solve the larger problems which face the country.

" When we face the future we should only think in terms of unity of India and not divide these major problems in water-tight compartments," he said.

India was predominantly an agricultural country, Pandit Nehru went on. But we should expand our industries to make our country self-sufficient in manufactured goods which could provide employment to the vast number of urban people. The basic problems of poverty of the peasantry should also be solved for which there should be a revolutionary transformation in the agrarian economy. For all these tasks Pandit Nehru

said freedom of India was an urgent issue which must be faced squarely.

Pandit Nehru declared that there was no frustration among the people and India would march forward to her goal of freedom with the united efforts of people.

## FIRE OF FREEDOM

" The British power is fading from the Indian scene. True we have not now Swaraj. It is also true that the Government can suppress the people for tne time being through the help of the military. But how long ?" asked Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru addressing a public meeting at Sharpur, District Azamgarh, where eight people died of police firing and one woman to save her honour committed suicide by drowning herself during the August movement of 1942.

During Pt. Nehru's three-day tour in the eastern districts people presented purses worth about Rs. 26,000.

"The Congress is the only power which can face the British Government and achieve independence. It is impossible for the Muslim Leagne to get freedom for Pakistan much less of Hindustan," remarked Pt. Nehru addressing a public meeting of predominately Muslims at Mau Azamgarh yesterday morning.

He drew the pointed attention of the audience to the fact that " Communal organisations were either idle or hostile to country's struggle for freedom during the last three years. The League and the Hindu Sabha helped the British Government in some way by relegating the freedom demand in second place.

Pt. Nehru remarked : " There is no religious problem in India because India from time immemorial conceded religious and cultural and linguistic freedom to all. These are only economic and political problems."

He appealed to all to support Congress candidates—both Hindus and Muslims.

## LOVE FOR PT. NEHRU

Intensity and depth of feeling towards Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has become the symbol of India's hopes and aspirations represented by the Indian National Congress can be gauged from the fact that the residents of Kutabpura, a hamlet consisting of 20 houses only which were set on fire by the police during the August movement, collected Rs. 5/- each among

themselves and contributed to the purse presented by Pt. Nehru on behalf of Azamgarh people. In the district of Azamgarh, it is learnt, 27 people were killed and 200 houses set on fire by the police and property worth Rs. 50,000 damaged during the August movement.

Pt. Nehru added that there was no justice under the British rule.

" The August movement was the symbol of India's growing strength and I am glad that the masses of India accept the Government's challenge to crush the Congress—the embodiment of India's will to freedom—and rose equal to the occasion." Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru thundered addressing a public meeting on Sunday evening at Azamgarh town. Mr. Inder Deo Tripathi, President of the District Congress, presided.

He made scathing criticism of the personnel of the Indian Civil Service and said these permanent servicemen, though spending practically the whole of their life, would not learn or unlearn anything and referred how the bungling bureaucracy, the Bengal Government, and the Government of India were responsible for the death of 30 to 40 millions of people in Bengal due to starvation.

Pandit Nehru also said that the problem of demobilised soldiers could not be solved by such an inefficient government.

He added, "Swaraj is the right of all and not of a few. In a Swaraj Government poverty will be a thing of the past."

### "DELHI CHALO"

The slogans of the Indian National Army, "Bharat Chhoro," "Delhi Chalo" and "Azad Hind", which were raised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at a meeting at Lucknow, have become very popular. These slogans have reached even the innermost villages of the provinces.

Pandit Nehru as he travelled from Saidabad to Ballia was cheered almost at every wayside station with the above slogans.

# Editorial Notes

## INDIA AND THE WORLD

P. 2. **There is no rest..................never rest** (antique lines). These are remarkable lines, reminding us of the dynamic spirit of Ulysses.

> We toil alone
> Who are the first of things,
> And make perpetual moan,
> Still from one sorrow to another thrown,
> Nor fold our wings,
> And cease from wanderings,
> Nor steep our brows in slummer's holy balm,
> Nor hearken what the spirit sings,
> 'There is no joy but calm !'
>
> (*Tennyson*)

There is no doubt that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has studied *Ulysses* and the *Lotus-Eaters* and imbibed their eternal spirit. Again and again in his writings Jawaharlal meets the same knotty problems which faced Ulysses.

P. 3. **Sixteen years ago...............** This refers to the Non-violent Non-co-operation Movement of 1920. Note the remarkable tribute paid to "our leader" which means Mahatma Gandhi. He found the Congress an "ineffective body" and converted it into a fighting force.

P. 5. According to Jawaharlal, Fascism, Imperialism and Capitalism are the three names of one devil, as *Ram*, *Rahim* and *Allah* are the three names of one God.

P. 7. **This psychological aspect interests me** (second para). Jawaharlal is a very good student of Mob Psychology. That gives permanent value to his writings.

P. 8. **We in the Congress..............opposite camps** (italics). This sums up the attitude of the Congress towards denominational organizations. Jawaharlal is an uncompomising patriot.

P. 9. **Terrorism is always a sign of political immaturity.** See the subtle difference between terrorism, which is the battledore of a political child, and constitutionalism which is the staff of a political pensioner.

P. 10. The two-faced leadership of the middle classes is the enemy of socialism. The middle classes look up and long to become capitalists. They have not the moral courage to come down and shake hands with the labourers. The idea of respectability, to which the middle classes cling desperately, is the invention of the vested interests. It is said about Bombay that only the richest and the poorest can be happy, the rich in their palaces and the poor on the pavements, but the middle people reject the pavements and are dismissed from the palaces.

P. 12. The middle classes, in spite of all their faults and foibles, are very good freedom-fighters. They have kept the flag of freedom flying in India as well as in Britain. Although the middle classes are opposed to socialism, they make very good democrats. In fact, democracy itself is a middle class conception. Democracy, as Jawaharlal said once, is the unique art of getting money from the rich and votes from the poor.

P. 14. Mark Jawaharlal's faith in socialism. It is not merely his economic doctrine. It is his vital creed. He holds it with all his head and heart. According to his faith, Socialism is the only key to India's problems.

P. 15. Socialism does not fit into the present ideology of the Congress.

P. 16. **A charter of slavery is no law for the slave.** Let the international jurists take note of it.

P. 18. **Are we to go back again ?** History repeats itself but the history of an enslaved country repeats itself very often. Again and again the British have confronted us with the problems of 1920.

P. 22. **With the Federation dead, the provincial end of the Act will also go.** This has proved correct. Except in the Punjab, where the Government does not sail under communal colours, Provincial Autonomy has been shipwrecked everywhere.

P. 25. **"Russia is not supposed to be a democratic country......"** Note the correctness of Jawaharlal's views ! Britain and America have always carried out a propaganda

of vilification against U. S. S R. Jawaharlal thinks, and thinks rightly, that Russia has all the elements of democracy. The Russian system is the true humane system of government. Even though Russia does not believe in God, God believes in Russia. God loves the Communists as much as He did Abou Ben Adhem. The name of Russia is not found in the list of those countries which love God but in the list of those countries whom God loves.

P. 27. **Let us not indulge in tall talk before we are ready for big action.** Mark the tone of practicability, Jawaharlal is no visionary like Mahatma Gandhi.

P. 29. **Leaders come and go......India goes on and so does India's struggle for freedom.** What a storm of emotions is imprisoned in this idea ! The river of freedom flows on. Jawaharlal again reminds us of Tennyson's *Brook* :

"Men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever."

But Jawaharlal's passion for freedom has not only the calmness of immortality, it has also the fire of Byron :

"For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won."

Jawaharlal has indeed put the Byronic wine in the Tennysonian bottle.

## POLITICAL TRAVELS

P. 30. **The call of the jungle and the mountain has always been strong within me.** Jawaharlal is as good a lover of Nature as Wordsworth. He comes closer to Wordsworth all the more, because unlike Tennyson, as it is clear from arguments on this page and the next, Jawaharlal does not believe that Nature is "red in tooth and claw." Jawaharlal prefers law of the jungle to human slavery and world wars. Nature murders, but man massacres.

P. 33. **India seemed to be a green and pleasant.** Why seemed ? Mark the use of the word "seemed." It is ironical. And Jawaharlal is a master of irony. Prolonged enslavement has deadened our sense of appreciation, and consequently the beauties of India *seem* to us to be so at long intervals.

" We have no time to stand and stare."

P. 36. **The idea of special safeguards for a minority group was full of peril for that group.** Mark the psychological authenticity underlying this thoughtful statement.

## ARTICLES OF FAITH

P. 39. **I was perhaps more an Englishman than an Indian.** Motilal spared no pains to Europeanize his son. But he failed. It was Jawaharlal who dragged his father behind him into the Congress fold. John Gunther has nicely commented upon this in *Inside Asia.* Jawaharlal confesses in his *Autobiography* that he has become a queer mixture of East and West.

P. 41. **We have few rights and privileges left in this country.** How correct have the Defence of India Rules proved it to be !

P. 43. **Affection and loyalty......the bayonet.** These are magnificent words in which Jawaharlal reaches the zenith of his emotions in the court.

P. 44. **I marvel.........glorious dream.** These lines remind us of Christ and crucifix.

## INDIA'S WEAPON OF WAR

P. 47. **Non-violent non-co-operation cannot die.** Uttered twenty-two years ago, how prophetic were these words !

P. 49. **Violence has had a long career in the world.** The lessons of two World Wars have been lost on international diplomats.

P. 52. **Religion has become the excuse for many sins.** It is a good placard to be hung up in every temple, church and mosque, the Gurdawara, the pagoda and the fire-temple.

## MESSAGE TO EUROPE

P. 56. **The Indian War of Independence.** This is the correct description of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. A rebel is one who loses the battle. The victor enslaves all laws of justice to his processional car. Had Hitler and Mikado won the war, Churchil and Roosevelt would have been on the list of criminals.

## VISIONS OF WAR

P. 61. **Out of fear comes hatred and out of that comes violence.** It almost sounds like a doctrine from the Bhagavad Gita. Jawaharlal's formula is psychologically true. Do we run because we fear ? No—we fear because we run. It is always the weak-kneed man whether he takes the offensive or whether he takes to his heels. Hitler had fear of Russia ; he tried to run away by making peace : but he shilly-shallied and his fear determined him to attack. And this attack cost him his land and life.

P. 63. **War now-a-days very largely depends on transport.** Nobody knew the exact importance of this idea when it was actually suggested by Jawaharlal. Now we know that the Second World War was entirely a war of transport. I remember an editorial in *The Civil and Military Gazette* in which the editor admired the Germans for their uncanny skill in surmounting transport difficulties.

## MESSAGE TO WOMEN

P. 69. **The future of India cannot consist of dolls and playthings.** Jawaharlal's advice to women is strong and straightforward. He excites women to revolt against men as he excites men to revolt against the British.

## THE BOY COMES HOME

P. 71. **I did not know that it was a special merit on my part to visit foreign countries.** Mark the ironical tone ! Jawaharlal is not in favour of Indians going abroad except for very special reasons.

## THE PUNJAB, INDIA AND THE WORLD

P. 75-76. **The moving finger......half a line.** Jawaharlal is a great believer of political destiny. We cannot change our destiny, as Shakespeare said, "rough-hew it how we will."

P. 85. **We are told...... last war.** This passage provides a very good food for thought. The British have long denied us freedom on the plea that we cannot defend ourselves.

## REVOLT OF YOUTH

P. 89. **A healthy society must have the seeds of revolt in it.** Mark the idea ! And how correct it is ! If India were a free country, Jawaharlal would have been still a revolutionary.

P. 90. **How can that Brahma.........He is not God !** Jawaharlal is an atheist without the sting of atheism in him. Were he to argue with God, I am sure he will win him over to his side.

## THE EMPIRE OF YOUTH

P. 96. **I am no weaver of the fine phrases.** Yet nobody can weave finer phrases than Jawaharlal ! His very denial is a proof. But his phrases are woven by his ideas. He does not find ideas for his words, as Tennyson used to do. Like Christ, Jawaharlal's ideas find words for themselves.

P. 102. **" In the City of Tabriz...... welcomed."** This

is a new weapon of conquest. A country armed with this humane armament cannot be defeated. India must emulate Russia. Soviet sincerity has quite disarmed the diplomats.

P. 104. **"You and I.........federation of the world."** While Jinnah is busy with his scissors of Pakistan, Jawaharlal dreams of the United States of the World !

## DOMINION STATUS OR INDEPENDENCE

P. 107. **" If India gets......elsewhere."** This is a very significant fact. It is strange how we have overlooked it. If we get Dominion Status, we also get imperialism into the bargain.

## SUNRISE OF SOCIALISM

P. 111. **The cry for independence is no new cry in India.** We often forget the great struggle of 1857 and previous efforts made by the heroes. We are often made to misunderstand that we got our conception of freedom from English school books. What a pity !

P. 118. **We must watch with vigilance that we are not exploited again as we were in 1914.** We did not act up to the advice of Jawaharlal. We did not watch with vigilance. We were exploited again. But Nehru warned us eleven years ahead !

## CAN INDIA DEFEND HERSELF ?

P. 120. **For the present, however, the union must necessarily be the union of the lion and lamb with the lamb inside the lion.** " On " is a misprint. It should have been " lion. " The idea is remarkable, when Britain is often looked upon as the Mother Country with colonies as her daughters.

P. 124. **The best test of culture is that of language.** Mr. Jinnah often forgets that.

## CHALLENGE TO IMPERIALISM

P. 126. **The whole world to-day is one vast question mark.** These nine suggestive words nutshell an ocean of meaning.

P. 129. **No majority can crush a determined minority.** Here is a very significant slogan which the Muslims must bear n mind. Pakistan is not necessary for the protection of the Muslims. Nehru has outlined in this para a very vital idea which is often overlooked.

P. 130. **Recently there has been a seeming offer of peace.** This refers to the Round Table Conference. How

ironical—all the more ironical—the word "seeming" appears in 1945 !

P. 131. **Peace cannot come at the point of the bayonet.** But the British imperialists know no other kind of peace.

P. 133. **We have quarrelled about words.** Indian politics has become notorious for verbosity.

P. 136. **We have to decide for whose benefit industry must be run.** Pandit Nehru believes that industrialization has little value unless it directly benefits the peasants. To-day industry is producing only millionaires.

P. 138. **Mass movements must essentially be peaceful.** Pandit Nehru does not favour terrorism, because terrorism upsets a mass movement. Terrorism is something different from "organized revolt." Mass movement may develop into an organized revolt. The August Disturbances of 1942 were of the nature of " organized revolt " and that is clear from the Government Report entitled : *The Congress Responsibility for Disturbances.* Mr. Winston Churchill was not justified when he characterised the events as " acts of terror."

P. 140. **Their fate will be decided in the plains of India.** Pandit Nehru thinks that we cannot help Indians overseas until India becomes a free country. India must help herself before she can help her children abroad. Indians overseas will continue to suffer hardships so long as their motherland is a subject country. Subjection is the root of all our ills. Freedom alone can bring the panacea.

P. 141. **Time has gone for secret conspiracy.** Like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru does not believe in political secrecy. " We have now," he says " an open conspiracy to free India from foreign yoke."

## THE POLITICAL QUAGMIRE

P. 144. **We want to break the imperialist connection with Britain.** Independence does not mean the cessation of friendly relations. It is remarkable that Gandhi and Nehru do not forget, and will not let anybody forget, the difference between Britain and British imperialism. George Washington did not think of this spiritual idea when he launched the American Struggle for Independence. Nor have the Irish ever thought of it. The Irish and the Americans were the whole-hog haters of Britain. Spirituality is the golden thread of Indian statesmanship.

P. 147. **India has had the greatest influence on British foreign policy.** Britain has always hesitated to take a step that might endanger her strangle-hold on India. As a farmer with a cow is afraid of taking to the highway at night lest the robbers sweop on him, so warily does Britain tread international politics. Indian possession has made Britain rather timid and she has again and again desisted from championing the cause of democracy. This was the case in Munich debacle when Chamberlain (of "umberalla" fame) bent down on his knees before Hitler. Large domains have unnerved Britain as much as large hoards unnerve a *Bania* in an Indian village.

P. 148. **Middle Eastern Empire from the borders of India to Constantinople.** Had the British succeeded in setting up this enormous empire, it would have strengthened their grasp in Asia beyond any description. Luckily, they did not succeed through sheer lack of self-confidence. Any Lord Clive would have done the trick.

P. 150. **The Frontier men are very brave people.** Pandit Nehru is a warm admirer of the Pathans.

P. 155. **We always hover on the edge of illegality.** Here is a very important idea. The Congress is permanently an illegal body and enjoys no security and hence it can undertake no long-distance plans.

P. 159. **Histories exaggerate a little.** India has never been conquered by the strength of the invading armies from the Khyber Pass. India has always been a victim of internal troubles. Free India can stop any invader in any part of India.

## SCIENCE AND PROGRESS

P. 165. **Too much engrossed in the business of politics.** The problem of Indian freedom has overshadowed all other considerations.

P. 166. **I have long been a slave driven in the chariot of Indian politics.** Pandit Nehru describes touchingly his sweet memories of Cambridge where he was a student of science.

## BEYOND OUR FRONTIERS

P. 171. **Nationalism is in ill odour to-day in the West, and has become the parent of aggressiveness.** As the sun of nationalism is rising in the East, it has already set in the West. Now the hope of Civilization lies in Asia rather than in Europe.

P. 173. **This is the dilemma of Britain to-day.** Britain

the most democratic country in the world, has been pursuing the most undemocratic policy in India.

## THE ROMANCE OF INDEPENDENCE DAY

P. 177. **We stand by that pledge.** It is clear from the *Autobiography* of Pandit Nehru that he has a great respect for the pledge, the National Flag and other symbols of India's freedom. He would not mind treading the path of violence if the National Flag were dishonoured.

## ON THE HORNS OF DILEMMA

P. 178. **We cannot support dominating imperialism.** Consequently we have to fight Britain, however we might approve of British democracy and British culture.

## CONGRESS, LEAGUE AND WAR

P. 182. **It is a tragedy that at this supreme crisis in our national history the League should have sided with full-blooded reaction.** Should the Muslim League have joined hands with the Congress rather than the British Government, we should have been much nearer our goal of independence than we actually are.

P. 183. **Let us forget our differences.** This is the finest formula to India's freedom.

## INDIA AND CHINA

P. 186. **Both of them have a great part to play in the future.** Pandit Nehru is a great admirer of China. Most of his speeches in 1942 were devoted to the heroism of China. He wanted the British to quit so that India may help China effectively.

## NATIONALISM FACES IMPERIALISM

P. 189. **The lamps of liberty were being put up.** It pained Pandit Nehru more than anybody else when he saw country after country going under the heels of Fascism.

## CAN INDIANS GET TOGETHER ?

P. 191. **Our minds function in set grooves.** Although man is known as a rational animal, it is an admitted fact that men seldom think. We act by habit. We live and die by habit.

P. 196. **Can the Indians get together ? I have no doubt that they can and they will.** This is the prophetic verdict of Pandit Nehru. And his prophecies have seldom gone wrong.

## PAKISTAN AND HINDUSTAN

P. 197. **There is no place for Pakistan in this age of Atomic Bomb.** This statement has been criticized by Pakistanists but not with much judgment. What Nehru wants to say is that we require larger states and not smaller ones to defend ourselves against dangerous weapons. That is why Pandit Nehru is insisting on South Asia Republic, comprising India, Burma, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq.

P. 200. **Pakistan was only a sentimental slogan.** Nobody can deny the authenticity of this slogan. Nazis used slogans effectively to saddle themselves into absolute power.

P. 202. **There was misuse of religion.** The slavery of India is due to our undue fervour for religious dogmas.

## INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

P. 207. **Their dominating motive was love for India's freedom.** Even the British officers in Burma and Singapore have praised the heroism of the Indian National Army.

## THE PUNJAB AND THE PUNJABIS

P. 212. **Latent energy and unbounded enthusiasm.** Pandit Nehru regrets that the Punjabis are not making a suitable use of their physical powers.

## NEHRU MISCELLANY

P. 216. **Neither slogans, nor prayers.** The problems of India cannot be solved through sentimental channels. Nehru is a practical politician.

P. 218. **In my list there will be many high officials sitting in Delhi who will be war criminals.** British bureaucracy is harbouring many enemies of the Indian people, men who are responsible for Bengal famine and atrocities of 1942 and black marketeering.

## INDIA'S MARCH TO FREEDOM

P. 121. **Britain's rule in India is the result of our disunity.** But our disunity itself is the result of Britain's rule. It is difficult to decide whether the egg came first or the hen. It is, however, certain that the egg of Indian disunity hatched the British hen two centuries ago, but ever since the British hen has been laying egg after egg of Indian disunity.

P. 224. **It is in the best interest of the country to keep away from Muslim League leaders hereafter.** The Congress took three decades to arrive at this decision. Even now the fears of the Nationalist Muslims are not appeased that Mahatma Gandhi might again undertake a pilgrimage to the Mount Pleasant.

P. 232. **Delhi Chalo.** If Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had found himself in Singapore, it is difficult to imagine whether he would not have behaved and acted in the same manner in which Subhas Chander Bose did.

THE END




# The Indian Printing Works

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